Thursday, March 31, 2011 ++ 3 sections / Vol.36 / No.113 P18 | www.inquirer.net | Mobile Alert Text BLOOM INQUIRER to 2287 | Rated G by NCAM

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS

TRIBUTE TO JAPAN New York-based Filipino artist Rafael Fonden, aka Skye Nicolas in the Big Apple's art circles, projects the UFC Grandson on the side of the Verizon Building on 1st Avenue, New York City. He called the 4 channel projection "New York Artist Skye Nicolas Responds To Japan Earthquake By Breathing Life To Giant Heroes."

## Pinoys 'Jam for Japan' in 3 cities April 1

By Pothole Concepcion
Entertainment

SATURDAY night, the party was in full swing at Chalie's Speakeasy (a jazz club on Malugay Street in Makati City). It was a celebration for the success of the recent 6th Philippine International Jazz Festival (Manila leg), and several musicians had dropped by to play impromptu numbers. United States Ambassador to the Philippines Harry K. Thomas Jr. was dancing with singer Pat Castillo.

"Then the music stopped. Besides [illegible]

# 'Am I going to die today?'

## Nation mourns for 1st Pinoys executed in China

*No farewell hug but mama's voice recording will make up for it*

THEY were told they were to die only yesterday morning.

"I was the first one to see her," Sally Villanueva's younger sister Melona Ordinario told radio dzBB from Xiamen, China. "She looked sick and we both cried. She said, 'What are you doing here, why are you all crying, am I going to die?' She tried to console us. She said, 'It's okay I have accepted my fate. I will be your angel and watch over you.'"

In Manila, President Aquino shortly after noon went to the Palace chapel and prayed for the souls of Villanueva, Ramon Credo and Elizabeth Batain, who were convicted of drug trafficking in China.

The President got word that the executions had been carried out in China while in a meeting with Catholic Church officials led by Manila Archbishop Cardinal Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales, his spokesperson Edwin Lasmeda said.

THE DAUGHTER of Sally Villanueva was not able to speak to her mother before she was executed yesterday in China.

But Princess Mae Joy Villanueva, 13, said she had been assured by her grandparents, Basilisa and Geronimo Ordinario, that they would bring home a recording of their last conversation with her mother.

She said the last one in Avon, Isabela, that the voice

$1 MILLION? Umar Patek is shown in this undated poster released by the Philippine National Police and the US Rewards For Justice Program.

PLDT-DIGITEL DEAL

## End of unlimited calls, texts feared

By Doris C. Dumlao, Paolo Montecillo and Sol C. Calalimgan Jr.

THE RETURN of telecom duopoly in the country can shore up profits for leading players Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT) and Globe Telecom and may spell setbacks in the industry's softening of unlimited voice and text messaging services to consumers, lawmakers said yesterday.

PLDT recently signed a share-swap deal that will allow it to take majority control of Digitel Telecommunications, whose cheap services through the Sun Cellular brand have gained sharply at the profitability of traditional leaders PLDT and Globe Telecom.

The stellar rise in the stock prices of PLDT and Globe Telecom after the deal was announced indicated a growing perception that with Digitel now out of the way, the two companies can now collect higher prices for their services.

In one of the internal memos issued by Globe management to employees when the PLDT-Digitel deal was announced on Tuesday, the Ayala-led telecom unit said one potentially good outcome was that "PLDT is seen to carry the cost of bringing redundant back to the market by paying for the acquisition and that Globe is seen to benefit

ABS-CBN "Ending Globe may be a possibility now."

## Doc dances to new beat as liver transplant survivor

By Tarra Quismundo

DANCING TO the beat of a new life, Dr. Julius Salvendia Jr. smiled as the stage with a smile aside, his feet in step with the rhythm of Shakira's "Waka Waka (This Time for Africa)," the anthem for the 2010 Fifa World Cup.

That the 51-year-old could dance at all was quite a feat for a man who, less than a month ago, was given only six months to live because of an end-stage liver disease.

Salvendia is considered the country's most successful adult liver-transplant survivor. He is showing "remarkable" recovery after a roughly 12-hour operation on March 9 at St. Luke's Medical Center that gave him a new liver.

"If He let you live, He will has a plan for you. I talked to God as if He's a friend and I told him: "Come down here. Let's talk," Salvendia told reporters yesterday.

He said he was determined to recover quickly. "If it will take long, I will be sick for a longer period. So I set a goal to take five steps today, then tomorrow

## No 'PI' in PH, US envoy tells media, guards

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

FLYING close-in security of US Ambassador to the Philippines Harry K. Thomas Jr. manhandled the media and groped a female reporter while the diplomat was glimpse ambush interview at the Armed Forces of the Philippines Medical Center yesterday.

Security at the military hospital in

## Bali, Makati bomber arrested in Pakistan

A SENIOR Indonesian al-Qaida operative blamed for the 2002 Bali bombings has been arrested in Pakistan, a top high-profile capture that could provide valuable intelligence about regional terrorist networks and possible future plots.

Umar Patek, a suspected member of Jemaah Islamiyah with ties to militant groups in the southern Philippines, its neighboring countries and beyond, was captured early this year in Pakistan, local and foreign intelligence sources said.

He was reported to have traveled from Indo to the Philippines, raising questions

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WEATHER FORECAST

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2D 3D
6 8 23
26 30
8 15

SWERTRES
6 5 8
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8 0 1

4D
2 1 3 1

MEGALOTTO 6/45
5 17 28 30 36 39
P6,540,757.20

SUPER GRANDLOTTO 6/49
2 14 18 35 45 50
P75,779,125.20

# Spill the beans, Ping dared

By Nikko Dizon and Jayvee T. Sarao

HELLO! This is not about you, Mr. Senator.

The daughters of slain publicist Bobby Ilarer yesterday decried Sen. Panfilo "Ping" Lacson's harrowing hour he supposedly became a victim of injustice when he was charged with the murders of Ilarer and his driver, which forced him to flee to avoid arrest.

"This case is not about you, it is about our father's death," said Ilarer's fretful 30-something daughters—Corina Ilarer, Sabina Ilarer-Perez, Emily Ilarer-Hungerford and Jacquelyn Ilarer-Hemrick.

The sisters challenged Lacson to reveal the mastermind behind the murder of Ilarer and Emilio Tumbocon ago.

"As citizens of the country you were elected to serve, so whenever we leave, we have the right to know. If you felt injustice the earlier time you were away, imagine how much injustice our families feel right now," the sisters said in a statement read for them by their lawyer at a National Press Club forum on Wednesday.

### Reveal the truth

"If your heart and soul are really for the victims seeking justice for their loved ones, then set aside your personal grievances and reveal the truth. Show us that justice exists in the country you were elected to serve," they said.

They said Lacson should reveal what he said he knew to the head of the Philippine National Police (PNP) in 2000 when Ilarer and his driver, Emmanuel Corbito, were kidnapped at the Ortigas flyover in Manila. The two were seen in Barra in Pasay, Cavite, where they were tortured and strangled to death before their bodies were burned.

Twenty-two people, including police officers associated with Lacson, were charged with the murders.

Lacson left the country and went into hiding last year after a court found probable cause to order him for the murders and issued a warrant for his arrest. He surfaced last month after the Court of Appeals ruled that there was no probable cause to charge him and quashed the arrest warrant.

Since his return, Lacson has been granting interviews to the media but has declined to reveal whom he had been hiding and who had helped him.

The Ilarer sisters said they were issuing the statements to respond to some of Lacson's comments about the Ilarer case.

One of these was Lacson's statement that he had an "inkling" of who were responsible for the killings but was "turned off" because the Ilarer family was blaming him.

"Initially, we only proceeded with the evidence presented to us, evidence that was available to us. Only because you were 'turned off,' you denied our families the truth and justice that we have been looking for?" they said.

### Willing to cooperate

If Lacson wasn't open yet to be "turned" on the idea that he was behind the murders, then he should reveal the information that he said he had about the murders, they said.

They also cited Lacson's statement that he was willing to cooperate with the Ilarers as long as he was not "pinnacled for help."

"If the senator really and truly feels for the families of victims, he need not be pressured for help. He simply needs to give the victims the information he has, with candor. Bound on his entire life as a public servant, he has always been asking for that for years, yet we have received nothing, not even when he was still the head of the PNP," the Ilarer sisters said.

In 2000, Lacson delivered a privilege speech at the Senate, in which he denounced the misdeeds of deposed President and convicted plunderer Joseph Estrada and hinted at the possibility that Estrada may have something to do with the murders.

The senator said they were turned off by Lacson's comments about his life as a fugitive, boasting that he was able to elude arrest by using his law-enforcement training.

"You projected him as a senator, a person who is supposedly charged to create and uphold the law, to publicly proclaiming how he successfully evaded the very same laws he was elected to uphold. He do not understand what was so impressive about evading arrest," they said.

They also lauded our Lacson's statement that while on the run, he learned how to cook and wash dishes.

### Cannot be compelled

"Last time we checked, majority of Filipino lasers how to cook and wash dishes. What is wrong about knowing how to cook and wash dishes? Is that supposed to add to a person's stature?" they said.

Meanwhile, Sen. Miriam Santiago said Lacson cannot be compelled to identify the people who enabled him while he was on the run.

"He has a right against self-incrimination. Because he himself is the accused. No one refuses to take the stand," she said.

Senate Secretary Lotis de Leon has said Lacson's protective had a court to answer. With Tz Ramirez


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## Half of Pinoys want Marcos buried at 'Libingan'

HALF OF Filipinos want former President Ferdinand Marcos buried at the Libingan ng mga Bayani, the national heroes' cemetery, a survey by the Social Weather Stations released yesterday found.

The Pulse Asia's for 2011 found Weather Survey, conducted on March 4 to 7, asked 1,200 adult respondents nationwide, "Sa aray opinion, is the body of ex-Pres. Marcos worthy to be buried in the Heroes Cemetery or not?"

Fifty percent viewed that Marcos is "worthy to be buried in the heroes' cemetery," while 49 percent said that he is "not worthy." The remaining one percent had no answer.

Those who said the late dictator was worthy of being laid to rest in the Libingan ng mga Bayani were further asked, "Do you think he deserves a burial with official honors or a private burial only?"

Of the 50 percent, 39 percent said he should be "buried with official honors," while the remaining 10 percent said "private burial only." Lawrence de Guzman, Inquirer Research


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# 'Far worse' dengue outbreak seen–DOH

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THE DEPARTMENT of Health yesterday warned that the country may face a "far worse" dengue outbreak this year with health experts observing a deviation in cyclic peaks in the number of cases of the deadly fever.

At least 13,283 dengue patients have already been admitted in hospitals across the country from January to February this year, with 63 deaths as he reported Health Secretary Enrique Ona during the Dengue summit held in Manila yesterday.

Ona said the country experienced the worst outbreak of dengue last year with more than 120,000 documented cases, exceeding the record-high incidence since in 1998.

"This year, we may be witnessing a far worse outbreak of dengue fever [as] in the first two months of 2011, we've seen an early dramatic peak in the number and cases are no signs of letting up of this intensifying epidemic," Ona pointed out.

In Metro Manila alone, about 3,666 dengue cases were observed from January to February this year.

This is a 106-percent increase from the figures gathered in the same period last year, said Dr. Irma Asuncion, director of the Center for Health Development for Metro Manila.

"We are constantly advising the public to get rid of water-holding containers and improve water and other possible breeding grounds of mosquitoes as an initial step towards preventing the spread of dengue fever," she added.

# House prosecution team still has 3 more vacancies

By Gil Cabacungan

THE HOUSE of Representatives is having a hard time filling up the 11-member prosecution team in the impeachment trial of Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez because some of the candidates were linked to the previous administration.

"They should have no baggage from the past administration. They should have absolutely no ties with the previous administration," said House justice committee chair and Iloilo Rep. Niel Tupas Jr. who was steering the impeachment of Gutierrez as jointly trial of former President and now Pampanga Rep. Gloria Macapagal Arroyo.

The House impeached Gutierrez for betrayal of public trust for her inaction on the corruption cases and anomalies alleged against Arroyo and her family such as the fertilizer fund scam and the NBN-ZTE deal.

Tupas said that only eight have so far been named to the prosecution team and they were leaving a hard time naming the remaining three spots.

Aside from Tupas, the members of the prosecution team so far are Davao Norte Rep. Rodolfo Fortilla, Quezon Rep. Lorenzo "Erin" Tañada III, Cavite Rep. Joseph Emilio "Boyet" Gonzales, Bataan Rep. Magtanggol "Titet" Gunigundo, Akbayan party-list Rep. Arlene "Kaka" Bag-ao, Bayan Muna party-list Rep. Neri Javier Colmenares and Mindoro Oriental Rep. Rey Umali.

A source said Cavite Rep. Updio Barzaga Jr. was supposed to be named to the team but some administration officials complained that he was too involved with the Arroyo government being a member of the Lakas-Kampi who recently reunified in the newly-formed Nacionalista Party.

# Senators read up on law for Merci's impeach trial

By TJ Burgonio

SENATORS NOT just reading up on impeachment. They're taking a crash course in the rules of court from retired lawyers.

Senators are seriously taking their role as judges in the impeachment trial of Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez, even though it's seen as hardly on the same scale as the 2001 trial of deposed President and convicted plunderer Joseph Estrada.

Long before the trial begins on May 2, Sen. Miriam Defensor Santiago has already been reading Charles Black Jr.'s "Impeachment: A Handbook," and Raoul Berger's "Impeachment: The Constitutional Problems."

Black's book, an analysis of the law and history of impeachment, was "widely praised" in 1974 when President Nixon quit over the Watergate scandal, and when it was released during the 1999 trial of President Bill Clinton, according to the Internet-based Harold Tribune.

### Unique process

"Impeachment is a unique process. It's not generic, a class of its own," Santiago said at the resumption of the interregnum of parliament.

Neophyte Sen. Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s reading list include "Remedial Law on Jurisdiction, Procedure and Evidence" by Justice Hilarion Aquino, "Remedial Law Reviewer" by Judge Gil Vincent Albano, and "Basic Evidence" by Associate Justice Reynato Puno.

Senators are apparently heeding Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile's advice to use their 40-day break to brush up on the rules of court and evidence.

Some would even go further.

Sen. Juan Miguel Zubiri is hiring two "prominent" prosecution lawyers to walk him through the rules of court and beef up his legal team, but declined to name them for now.

"They're experts in the rules of court, and they're going to brief us on how to conduct ourselves during the final proper. Starting next week, we're going to have short briefings from them," he said.

### Crash course

Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, the son of the deposed President, is taking a **crash course in litigation from a trial** lawyer, and has requested that **his mentor** Lawyer Rudolf Jurado **do the same.**

Jurado's London Man Peter Gaynanan, a lawyer, will **have a lit**gator or a law professor to give him **a refresher course on the rules of** evidence as well as criminal and civil procedures.

Santiago, a constitutional and former trial court judge who served as a judge in the Estrada impeachment trial, said she hoped her colleagues would really hone up on the rules as they have promised.

"I don't want to see them searching just for last minute desktop aid. They will only be recording the legal thoughts of others whose we do not see and who are not accountable to our public," she said.

It's the senators' duty to be prepared for the trial and "provide the people with an impartial, well-thought out and objective trial," Aquino said.

"Anything less than that, we fail the people," he said.

Before adjourning last week for its Lenten break, the Senate accepted the six articles of impeachment against Gutierrez and adopted the rules of procedure for the trial.

It won't be convening as an impeachment court until May 9, when Congress resumes.

Gutierrez is charged with "betrayal of public trust" for allegedly sitting on major corruption cases involving former Cabinet officials of the previous Arroyo administration. She has denied the charges.

More than passing judgment on Gutierrez's guilt, the duty of the senators is to educate the public, Santiago said.

"It's not the Ombudsman that is on trial. It is our concept of justice that is on trial. And the most important function of the senators is to create the state of education on the justice system," she said.

### Public confidence

"We should be seen to have administered justice," said Santiago.

The trial should "restore public confidence in the justice system," said Sen. Gregorio Honasan.

To prepare for the trial, Senators Ralph Recto and Franklin Drilon said they will be reading through the voluminous attachments accompanying the articles of impeachment, including the documentary evidences presented on the fertilizer fund scam, the Mega Pacific deal and the NBN-ZTE broadband deal.

The difference between this trial and the Estrada trial is that "it provides a better perspective, better preparation. He knows when to expect at least in terms of procedure," said Drilon, who was a judge in the Estrada trial.

# Bill seeks to honor centenarians

A BILL seeking to award cash and other incentives to Filipino centenarians has been approved by a committee of the House of Representatives.

Minority Leader Erlel Lagman said that House Bill No. 3054 or "An Honoring and Granting Additional Benefits and Privileges to Filipino Centenarians, Declaring the 25th of September as National Respect for Centenarians Day and for Other Purposes," was passed unanimously last week by the committee on population and family relations.

Lagman, author of the bill, said centenarians are role models for "aging well and living long, three decades past the current life expectancy of the average Filipino of 71 years."

"Honoring and rewarding Filipino centenarians is a fitting testimonial to our getting value-rich and life-long achievements," he said.

Under the bill, Filipinos built in the Philippines and abroad are entitled to the following benefits:

- A cash gift of P10,000.00 on their 100th birthday and a congratulatory letter from the President of the Philippines;
- An additional cash reward from the local government unit where they are residing or the option of the local government unit concerned;
- Posthumous plaques of recognition in honor of all deceased centenarians who died before the effectivity of the law, to be presented to the nearest surviving relative;
- Fifty percent discount and exemption from the value-added tax, if applicable, on the sale of goods and services from all establishments for the exclusive use and enjoyment or availment of centenarians. Cynthia D. Salazar


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DAR MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. 10
SERIES OF 2011

SUBJECT: REVISED RATE OF FEES AND CHARGES

Pursuant to Executive Order No. 137 which provides for an allowable increase of 20% and based on the average inflation rate of 5.3% for the last eight (8) years (2003 - 2010), the following rate of fees and charges of the Department is hereby upgraded as follows:

| | Nature of Service/Fee/Charge | Old rate/charge | New rate/charge |
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| 1. | **Appeal or Petitions** from Agrarian Decisions or Orders of officers or agencies ex-situ | P150.00 | P1,000.00 |
| 2. | **Authentication** of every signature on any official records or document | P75.00 | P100.00 |
| 3. | **Certification** of every document or information based on records | P50.00 | P50.00 |
| 4. | **Copy fee** of every page/ sheet of official records or documents | P1.00 | P10.00 |

A pauper litigant shall be exempt from the payment of required fees pursuant to Section 21 (Rule 3) and Section 19 of Rule 141 of the Rules of Court, and Section 11 of DAR Memorandum Circular No. 12, Series of 2009 (**DAR Manual on Legal Assistance**).

This Circular supersedes DAR MC No. 10, Series of 2000 and takes effect 15 days after its publication.

28 March 2011, Diliman, Quezon City

VIRGILIO DE LOS REYES
Secretary

# 'Doc Rod' Paras Perez, artist, critic, scholar; 76

ARTIST, critic and scholar Dr. Rodolfo Paras Perez died early Wednesday at the intensive care unit of the Medical City in Pasig City. He was 76.

Paras was rushed to the hospital Sunday after he was found unresponsive at his home. He apparently had a massive heart attack, said Rodolfo Dato, an art collector and friend of Paras.

Known as "Doc Rod" for his scholarship and for having been variously president and assistant dean of the University of the Philippines College of Fine Arts, Paras was a Harvard-trained art historian and critic who became known for his graphic works.

He was considered one of the most influential art critic in the past four decades. He obtained a doctorate degree in Art History from Harvard University, Master of Fine Arts in Painting, and Master of Arts in Art History from the University of Minnesota.

He took up Bachelor of Arts in Painting from the University of the Philippines where he graduated cum laude.

He was also a recipient of several scholarships such as Fulbright-Smith Mundt, Asia Foundation and JDR 3rd Fund awardee; Rockefeller fellowship and one of the few Filipinos awarded the Harvard Travelling Fellowship.

He was also a member of the Phi Kappa Phi International Honor Society and the Accademia delle Arti del Disegno—Collegio del Professori, Florence, Italy.

Dr. Paras-Perez earned his watershed legendary status as the country's foremost art historian and multimedialist when he exposed secret Cezanne forgeries which will at the fourth centennial of Art History at Harvard.

Among the books he authored, the "definitive book" on Hamenoha stands out as among the best art books published in the country and is now sold overseas.

He remains lie at Everyman Chapel and Crematory Chapel B. C. Buenaventa, Ave. Ortigas in Pasig City.

Cremation will be on Friday after the 11:00 a.m. Mass.

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# Gov't remiss in remitting contribution to PhilHealth—COA

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE GOVERNMENT has been remiss in remitting its contributions to the Philippine Health Insurance Corp. (PhilHealth) for the benefit payments of indigent members, according to the Commission on Audit.

In its 2009 report on PhilHealth, the COA said it found a P3.39 billion deficiency between the latter's total benefit payments to indigent members from 2005 to 2009, and the premium contributions of the local government units and the national government.

Under the implementing rules and regulations of the National Health Insurance Act, the premium contribution subsidy for indigent families should be distributed by the national government and the local government units.

PhilHealth's reimbursement of benefit claims from its less privileged members amounted to P3.5.57 billion, but the local and national government's corresponding share/contribution totaled P2.2.78 billion. The national government's total underremittance had amounted to P6.44 billion as of the end of 2008, the COA said.

"The deficiency of P2,299,528,241 was due mainly to the under-remittance/nonremittance of the NG's [national government's] premium, which had accumulated to P6,443,322,776 as of Dec. 31, 2009," it said.

The COA said that if this is not properly addressed by PhilHealth's management, it could affect its reserves in the long run.

The audit agency and PhilHealth should "vigorously" follow up with the budget department the release of special allotment release order for the national government's counterpart subsidy.

"Premium subsidy from the LGUs and NG is vital to sustain the provision of health care services to indigent members and their beneficiaries. The provision of health insurance coverage to the less privileged families is considered the heart of the National Health Insurance Program," it said.

It also said that though PhilHealth had periodically communicated with the budget department on the current billings, the remittance of the government share had at times been untimely, and that deficiency accumulated over the years.

Aside from asking for updates with the budget department, the COA also said PhilHealth should get support to persuade the concerned agency to release the subsidy, or release the matter to higher management.

PhilHealth told the COA that it would continue to follow up with the budget department the release of the money for the program.

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# Church leaders return to talks, agree to sex ed

By Jaymark B. Ly and Norman Bordadora

TOP CHURCH leaders yesterday agreed to the resulting of sex education to encourage students provided that values formation are incorporated in the teaching modules and that they will be taught in a "gradeo-grad" manner.

In a Palace meeting with President Aquino yesterday, Church officials led by Manila Archbishop Emeritus Cardinal Rosales acknowledged that sex education was "necessary" for teenagers and even for children who are "on the eve of puberty" aged 11 or 12, according to Msgr. Juanito Figuera, secretary general of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP).

The high-level meeting was part of the continuing dialog with the administration on the controversial reproductive health (RH) bill that the Church strongly opposes. The prelates who attended included CBCP president Tagaytay Bishop Nereo Odchimar and Cebu Archbishop Emeritus Ricardo Cardinal Vidal.

Health Secretary Enrique Ona, Social Welfare and Development Secretary Corazon Soliman, Budget Secretary Florencio Abad, Presidential Management Staff chief Julia Abad and presidential spokesperson Edwin Lacierda joined Mr. Aquino at the meeting.

According to Figuera, Malacañang sent out the invitation for a meeting last Friday, the day the Church led its biggest rally yet against the family-planning measure.

Rosales strongly suggested that the sex education being prepared by the DepEd should be age-appropriate for the learners, and that these should be taught in a graduated manner so not to overburden those young children," Figuera told a press briefing.

"In the modules he has seen, the scientific techniques on reproductive health (RH) will not overshadow the values, nothing about discipline, self-control and he was wondering what kind of education would this give to our young children," he said.

The CBCP and Malacañang also agreed to conduct house-to-house survey on the so-called "responsible parenthood" bill being proposed by Malacañang, as differentiated from the RH bill that is already in the final stages of approval at the House of Representatives.

According to Lacierda, Mr. Aquino told the prelates that there would likely still be disagreement between the government and the Catholic leaders on the responsible parenthood bill.

"The President told them there will really be parts of the bill which will not be in agreement with the teachings of the Catholic Church," he said.

"For instance, the use of condoms, artificial contraceptives. It is the role of the state to provide all means of family planning to citizens, especially to the disadvantaged," Lacierda said.

Lacierda said there was agreement of the meeting that condoms aren't abortifacients but the Church leaders still had concerns about them being distributed to contraceptives.

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# 'Am I going to die today? It's OK, I'll be your angel'

From page A1

They are the first Filipinos to be executed in China for drug trafficking.

In a Cabramatan funeral shortly after the news was confirmed, Maricaldang said it symbolized with the coroners' families for their loss and promised to go where drug traffickers.

Surrounded by a throng of supporters and journalists, Villanueva's family members in Manila reopened the unguarded files in terms of the executions broke.

There were similar reactions in the home of Cerda in Cavite, but Batista's tin had requested privacy and an appointment were with them.

### Biggest concealment

China normally does not announce executions. Amnesty International says China is the world's biggest executioner, with thousands of convicts killed every year.

Batista, Cerda and Villanueva were allowed no more visits than families for an hour before they were executed by lethal injection, in what turned out to be devastatingly emotional encounters.

The news was crying, she was partly incoherent. She had a lot of things to say." Villanueva's brother Jason Ordinario told dzBB. "She asked us to take care of her two children and make sure they finish their studies."

Myleine Ordinario said in her sister's message, released by a priest, said "she said she wants to be forgiven for all her sins, but she insisted that she was a victim."

### Women

In a report to the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), the Philippine consulate in Xiamen said family members of Cerda, 42, and Villanueva, 33, arrived in Xiamen No. 1 Detention Center at 7:30 a.m. yesterday.

The executions met with their respective families for the last time at 8:8 a.m. Between 9:40 and 10:40 a.m., their final sentences were promulgated at the 2nd Criminal Tribunal of the Intermediate People's Court.

At 10:00 a.m., Cerda and Villanueva were taken in an unidentified venue of execution.

At exactly 12 noon, Villanueva's family sitting with consulate officials, acted to the Xiamen Procuratorial Police for the "last and presentation and viewing" of her remains.

The consulate and Cagayan International Travel, a private firm, would ship Villanueva's remains to the Philippines.

At 1:30 p.m., the Intermediate People's Court turned over Cerda and Villanueva's death certificates, passports and other personal effects to consulate officials.

At about the same time, Cerda's family claimed his ashes from the Xiamen Crematorium.

### Shrunken

Batista's has arrived at Shenzhen Bo. 3 Detention House at 9 a.m. The final sentence was promulgated there at 9:30 a.m.

At 10:40 a.m., Batista and her family met for the last time.

At 11:10 a.m., the van taken to execution left center for execution.

At 12:30 p.m., consulate officials were notified by the Guangdong High People's Court that Batista had been executed.

The Philippine consulate in Guangzhou and arrangements for the shipment of Batista's remains were being made.

In a statement, Baldoz's family requested the media to stay away "during these traumatic times."

"We need to stay strongly as a family and focus our attention to God. The constant harassment is an invasion of our privacy... We welcome (but we do not allow any TV network or (news paper) to prolong anxiety of [illegible] or any member of our family," the family said.

It called on the media to "help instead in informing the public about the media especially of international drug running cases who are behind the road use of Filipino drug couriers."

### 'Vivid lesson'

The three countries, who were reportedly arrested in 2008 for each carrying carried kilograms of heroin into China, were executed despite repeated pleas by the Philippine government for a commutation of sentence.

"Our government had taken every available opportunity to appeal to the authorities in China on for clemency in these cases," Lacierda said in a statement read by his deputy Abigail Valte, in a briefing in Malacañang.

"The nation empathized with the families of the condemned overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) who are facing death penalties abroad," he said.

Lacierda held reporters that the President "sensed 'silent' when told about the executions during a break in a meeting with Cardinal Rosales and other Church officials including Archbishop Ricardo Cardinal Vidal to discuss the reconciliation bill.

He said it was Social Welfare Secretary Corazon Soliman, who was among the Cabinet officials present at the meeting, who suggested that the meeting pray for the souls of the three convicts.

Cardinal Rosales offered to lead the prayer at the Yellow Room but Soliman suggested they all go to the Palace chapel instead.

"We prayed for a few minutes," Lacierda said. "It was a sober moment."

Lacierda also said the executions would not affect the bilateral ties Philippines and China.

"We have to move on, and we have to be in close cooperation especially with respect to drug trafficking," he said.

He added that Mr. Aquino had underscored the need for government agencies to cooperate with China to strengthen ties "to make sure that [such an] incident would not happen again."

### Special treatment Plea

"God bless these souls" read the brief statement issued by Malacañang. Mr. Aquino observed a minute of silence at a cabinet session in memory of the three convicts.

Assistant Foreign Secretary J. Edmundo Maloza, the DFA spokesperson, told reporters that "in deference to the anguish and difficulties and grief being experienced by the Cerda, Villanueva and Batista families, the DFA is not making further statements as of the moment."

Foreign Secretary Albert del Rosario attended a "farewell reception Mass" held at the DFA headquarters in Pasay City for the deceased trio.

Del Rosario said the DFA was offering the "deepest sympathy" to the families for their loss.

From Quezon City, President Benigno Aquino, the President's adviser on overseas Filipino workers' concerns, said he was "deeply saddened" by the execution of Batista, Cerda and Villanueva.

Bitoy urged the nation to "pray for the repose of their souls and for the strength of their families."

"We must all commit ourselves fully to the fight against drugs and to take all necessary action to stop this menace from destroying more lives and families," he said. Reports from Amy E. Espinosa, Christine D. Avenido, AFP &Ariel Rosayo

REQUIEM FOR 3 PINOYS Photos for the three Filipinos who were executed in China for drug smuggling are on display in a church in Manila where a Roman Catholic priest is saying a special Mass for them and their families on Wednesday.

SALLY VILLANUEVA

RAMON CERDO

## *Jail officials assure safety of Sino inmates*

THE BUREAU of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) yesterday questioned the safety of Chinese nationals serving sentences in the Philippine prisons.

BJMP Director Reynaldo Jalandoni expressed the possibility of Filipino inmates attacking Chinese prisoners as a result of recent diplomatic tensions in China.

"We are now monitoring normal security procedures in our jails nationwide," he told the Inquirer.

Asked if he would order the temporary transfer of Chinese prisoners to a safer facility, Dail said he was not sued ha it.

"Besides, we might wrongly provoke our inmates to attack Chinese prisoners," he said.

According to Interior Secretary Jesse Robredo, 120 Chinese nationals, including eight women, are in jails across the country on drug charges.

He told 66 of these nationals were in the Bilibid Inmate Region. Marchen Bawar

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recording would make up for the missed chance for her and her 10-year-old brother Lenlen to give their mother a farewell hug.

Princess, who will graduate in salutatorian at the Tolisa Elementary School on April 9, said she would sing Bryan Adams' "Heaven" at the commencement ceremony in honor of her mother.

She said she was learning to come to terms with what had happened. "We are slowly accepting her loss although it is painful. That is why we did not go to China," she said.

Princess said she hoped her mother was able to see her graduation and that she has family had prepared.

She said she had asked her grandparents to make sure her brother ate well. (According to TV reports from Xiamen, prison officials are helping Cerda's relatives buy things in her favorite color: pink, strong milk, bar, packs of pork and.)

"What happened is my mother has opened my eyes. I have to defend the poor and the oppressed," Princess said.

### Gainful employment

In Malacañang, President Aquino last night sought understanding from the public and promised to generate more "gainful employment" in order to prevent Filipinos from being victimized by drug traffickers and convicted overseas.

In a statement he issued hours after the execution of Filipino drug mules Ramon Credo and Elizabeth Batista in China, the President offered his "deepest condolences to the families that they left behind" and said they would be provided livelihood assistance.

He reiterated that his administration had pleaded for a commutation of the death sentences but that China refused, and "we must respect their legal processes."

"I ask the public not to allow this situation to affect our historic friendship with the Chinese people," he said.

Mr. Aquino said that while the states were concerned of drug trafficking, "they can also be considered victims of unscrupulous recruiters and drug traffickers, and victims of a society that could not provide enough gainful employment in their home country."

He said that since he came to power late July, his administration had been going after drug syndicates. In the first quarter of 2011, he said, the Bilibid Criminal Registration Office (NBI) seized P1.44 billion worth of shabu, shut down two shabu laboratories, and arrested 23 foreign nationals involved in the drug trade.

He also said Villanueva's recruiters had been identified and charged before the Department of Justice.

The President acknowledged that "all over the world, problems, particularly in the Middle East, there are other Filipinos languishing in jails."

"Our ultimate goal is to create a situation where people are not pressured to resort to these things, where they can find enough gainful employment in the Philippines. Let us remain united and focused on this goal, for it is the ultimate means to bringing a better life for all," he said.

### Slap on the face

But the mildest Bilgarene Internet and the president of the three Filipinos in China should serve as "a potent slap on the face" of the Philippine government, for it to step it to her report police and peel it to build a self-reliant economy.

"Unfortunately, this crisis of [illegible] economic crisis that is translated into mounting queues of poor labor and the Aquino administration's [illegible] of privatization, liberalization and deregulation policies in favour of foreign interests, these are arguably the waves of woes for our 11 million OFWs and their families," it said.

### 'Pa-pogi' approach

The militant labor group Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) described as "shallow" Mr. Aquino's order to the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration and Overseas Workers' Welfare Administration to protect overseas Filipinos "would again be used as drug mules by international groups.

"It is precisely this 'pa-pogi' and laissez-as-usual approach of the government to the economic problems that is causing Filipinos to find work abroad and to be arrested by international crime syndicates," BMU chair Elmer Labog said.

"Mr. President, the issue is chronic poverty, hunger, unemployment, extremely low wages and your government's unscrupulous policies which you continue to implement by simply executing [Chino agencies] to issue warnings to would-be migrant Filipinos," Labog said.

But in his own statement, labor secretary Rosa Rebordosa said he had ordered local government units (LGUs) to be on guard against human trafficking syndicates in their respective jurisdictions.

"We need the support of the [LGUs] in our campaign against illegal recruitment because a number of our citizens are still being victimized by human traffickers," he said.

Rebordo said he had issued a separate directive to Philippine National Police Director General Jesus Versoza to intensify operations against human trafficking syndicates.

He told Bawalan that he expected "periodic reports on your accomplishments" in the matter.

### Miserable system

Fr. Edwin Gariza, executive secretary of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines' Episcopal Commission on Migrant and Itinerant People, said Batista, Credo and Villanueva would have had a different fate if social conditions in the country were better.

"We are not angry with China but with the system and the government that created the living conditions unbearable, and the victims are always the poor," he said.

Garcia officiated at a Mass shortly before yesterday's scheduled executions in Quezon City.

While the Mass held at the CBCP office in Intramuros, Manila, the priest fought back tears when he thanked those prayers that the executions had been carried out.

"We only have ourselves to blame... It's us, it's our problem," he said.

Garcia also said the government should seriously study what it could do to prevent more executions of Filipinos in China. "We hope that these three will be the last," he said.

Cotabato Auxiliary Bishop Angelito Lampon Tapalan said the government could do "many things" to help other Filipinos on death row in China.

"We are making an appeal to President Aquino to exert all efforts, to explore all possibilities in order to help them," Tapalan said over the Church-run Radio Veritas.

Isabela Bishop Martin Jumoad also appealed to government officials to address the perennial problem of poverty which, he said, drives ordinary Filipinos to find better-paying but dangerous jobs abroad.

### Victimized twice

Commission on Human Rights Chair Loretta Rosales called on China to uphold its adherence to the death penalty, saying such a form of punishment had no place in the judicial system.

Rosales also expressed grief over the execution of the three Filipino drug mules.

"It's very sad and lamentable because they were victimized twice—once by drug traffickers, then by the inhuman justice system," Rosales said in a statement. Reports from Villamor Visaya Jr., Inquirer Northern Luzon; Christine O. Avenido, Marlon Ramos, Jocelyn R. Uy, Philip C. Tubeza and Lala R. Salcedo/ra in Manila

# No farewell hug but mama's voice recording will make up for it

CANDLES IN THE WIND Sympathizers of Sally Ordinario-Villanueva hold candles outside the home of her sister Minnal Ordinario in Quezon City on Wednesday.

# PH safe from nuke fallout

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE WORST is over for the Philippines as far as the Japan nuclear crisis is concerned, an official of the Philippine Nuclear Research Institute said yesterday.

PNRI Deputy Director Gerocon Bernido said even the country's seas are safe from harmful levels of radioactivity, thus, there is no need for Filipinos to cancel plans to go to the beaches this summer.

According to Bernido, there is no reason for anyone to cancel their plans to hit the beaches.

"Most PNRI does not expect that harmful levels of radioactivity will reach Philippine waters. I would like to assure everyone it's still safe to go swimming especially that coming summer when kids are on vacation," Bernido told a press briefing yesterday.

Japan's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant has been crippled since a 9-magnitude earthquake struck Japan on March 11. Explosions, fires and the threat of a meltdown forced the evacuation of residents from the area. Recently, plutonium was found in soil samples at the plant site.

Small amounts of radiation from Japan has been detected in the Philippines, but officials have been quick to assure the public that there pose no harm.

Yesterday, Bernido said the radioactivity concentration in the Philippines is not expected to increase beyond the highest level, which was recorded on March 24.

Several factors also contribute to the reduction of radioactivity which include rain, the moisture in the atmosphere and the decay of radioactive materials, PNRI officials said.

"I think the worst is over. We'd like to assure everyone there is no threat in the Philippines or to Filipinos, but we continue to be monitoring the situation," Bernido said.

The radiation level in the country also remained normal at 100 to 124 nanosieverts per hour as of yesterday.

The PNRI will also collect rainwater samples from the Pacific Ocean to further show the public that there is no harm there from radiation, Bernido said.

She said the experts the PNRI use to find anything alarming in the water samples when they are tested for radioactivity. The water samples will be collected from Ilo-Ilo, Cagayan.

"We'll do it just for assurance. But we don't believe we'll find anything of significance," she said.

# DOJ to hold new case meeting on massacre case

By Jerome Aning

THE DEPARTMENT of Justice may soon call for a new case conference on the Maguindanao massacre following the resignation of two public prosecutors from the prosecution panel.

Herminio "Harry" Harapan Jr., one of the private lawyers and he has sought an audience with Justice Secretary Leila de Lima, together with all the prosecution lawyers, over the changes in the panel.

"I will seek an audience with the secretary over the organization of the prosecution panel. The meeting will be at her convenience should be the soonest possible," Harapan told reporters.

Harapan said he was "troubled" by the resignation of the two prosecutors at the trial of yesterday at first the court hearing the case was told that the suitcases to be presented was sick.

"All these things that are happening are very troubling. They do not look well for the new prosecution panel," Harapan said, resorting to the postponement the trial, the resignations of prosecutors Leland Member and alternate Magnaye, and the report of a rift between some of the government lawyers with another private counsel, Neri Colmenares.

The till was reportedly caused by Santos' questioning of the strategies by the public prosecutors.

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# End of unlimited calls, texts feared

From page A1

from it as profitability remains in a more stable and consolidated market."

Another telecoms analyst, Globe shares obtained by the business unit "We might find ourselves competing in a more rational marketplace with better margins so the new opposition could decide to scale back on the unfounded propositions that undermine industry."

### Consumers worried

Consumers are indeed now concerned over what they must weigh once the Sun Cellular's unlimited and bucket-priced call and text services like that public enjoys.

Sun Cellular introduced unlimited call and text services for fixed monthly fees only for Philippine markets, forcing its competitors—Smart of PLDT and Globe Telecom—to follow suit, resulting in lower profits.

"The fear of the public is whether PLDT—that used to oppose unlimited services—might change the [unlimited] Sun and everything it stands for," said Antonio Gal, president of consumer group TulfoWatch.

### Goodbye to price wars

Ty Tuason, Digitel's Chairman of Yuchengco Group of Companies, which results in innovation to arise, would suffice. "Say goodbye to the price wars [Though] not totally eliminated, [they] are being a threat very evident. It's now down to you—PLDT vs. Globe," he said.

But others still say this has

RAMOS-LINEN

GOKONGWEI

nothing to do with competition.

"We have to curb the enactment of an additional law to determine if the purchase is meant to curbed competition," said Revilla in a text message.

### Inevitability to complaints

Eastern Samar Rep. Benjamin Evardone also worried that consumer complaints on the poor quality of service and the telephone companies' inability to complaints would worsen.

"As it is, there are already mounting consumer complaints such as over billing and dropped calls that are not being addressed by the telcos. This should push the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) to intensify its monitoring over the industry players to prevent abuses," said Evardone.

### Pangilinan assurance

During the official announcement of the PLDT-Digitel deal on Tuesday, PLDT chair Manuel V. Pangilinan said the operations would remain separate. Data such as this PLDT has to unveil subscribers of both mobile brands. Smart Communications and Sun Cellular that they would continue to enjoy the same quality of service at the same price.

As a result of the deal, PLDT will be in control of most of the franchises for cellular mobile telephone service in the country.

### 70% market share

PLDT will also end up with three of the five third-generation or 3G licenses, which companies use to offer mobile broadband services.

Tuason's Chair said the government, particularly the NTC, should ensure that the new PLDT-Digitel tandem will not eventually monopolize the country's telecom realm.

With the deal, PLDT is expected to have a 70-percent market share in the country's competitive telecom industry with its nearest rival Globe and subsidiaries Globe Telecom has the remaining 30 percent.

With the PLDT group now controlling the bulk of the market, the pricing power of Globe Telecom has just weakened, said Congress Lawmaker 8 Co. head of research Jose Rhoel Lucero.

"Selling Globe may be a possibility now if the Ayala Group wants to entrust the remaining cities in the company. They may take up the fight in the future but still require extra resources, which they or their partner, Singapore Telecom, may not be willing to shell out just yet," Lucero said.

NTC Commissioner Gamaliel Cordoba declined to comment on the deal, saying that the regulator had yet to receive an application to approve the PLDT-Digitel merger.

However, the NTC's green light is required because a franchise given by Congress will change hands.

### Challenge to San Miguel

San Miguel Corp. (SMC), which aims to be a major telecom player after forging a joint venture with Qatar Telecom to launch the 700/1800 brand, thinks the industry's dynamics will have to vary much compared resulting in cramped dropped calls and slow data speeds," San Miguel president Ramon S. Ang said. "Be a little more patient, our services will come out with a huge difference," he added.

Analyst Lucero said SMC would be affected both positively and negatively by the deal. "The negative is that Liberty will have a tougher time now that the market space just became smaller for the telecom contenders. With the strategic direction currently overseen given the loss of its top executive (Anamonic Martinez), we wonder how Liberty will try to position itself in this new environment.

"The positive, however, is that San Miguel's financial strength has increased relative to its perceived rival, First Philippine Holdings Corp. First Pacific has given up a sizable chunk of its equity in the PLDT Group, which weakens its balance sheet to a degree," Lucero said.

# Doctor dances to beat of a new life as liver transplant survivor

From page A1

I have to make 30 steps," said the doctor.

Sobrevinas is relishing a second life and renewed health—a gift he has tirelessly given to countless patients in remote villages in Mindanao where he served as a barrio doctor before more than 20 years.

### Ready to go home

"We're happy to say that he's ready to go home today," said Dr. Juliet Lopez Cervantes, head of St. Luke's Center for Liver Diseases.

"He is the first liver transplant survivor with no complications from the transplant. The liver is performing positively, we see strong normal numbers... However, there is a big respon- sibility now on the part of the patient and his family if he wants to live long," Cervantes said at a press conference at St. Luke's Global City in Taguig.

Sobrevinas was referred to the St. Luke's team in December last year after he developed blood because of a rupture in his esophagus...a condition caused in liver cirrhosis that developed from a chronic Hepatitis B infection.

### Talstad needle

He acquired the disease in 1993 when he, then a medical technologist in Cagayan de Oro City, accidentally pricked himself with a needle that had traces of blood from a patient positive of Hepatitis B.

**A FIRM FIST** Dr. Julito Sobrevinas Jr., the country's most successful adult liver transplant survivor walks, dances with Dr. Juliet Lopez Cervantes during a news conference at St. Luke's Global City, Taguig City, on Wednesday. —REUTERS PHOTO

At the time of his accidental encounter, Sobrevinas's condition was not yet known to him.

He was diagnosed with cirrhosis of the liver in 2007 and was told he would need a liver transplant before the end of last year, doctors found that he had primary liver cancer, hepatocellular carcinoma, and had grown to 7 centimeters.

In Cervantes' words, Sobrevinas's health problems "would for sure kill him in six months."

After further evaluation, we found that his tumors were manageable. We decided that instead of helping him only with the cirrhosis, we might as well help him further with the complications of liver cirrhosis and the bleeding," Cervantes said.

She said they hoped decided to put him under evaluation for possible liver transplant despite his meager resources."

### Huge bill

As the transplant would cost around P3.9 million—far from what the family doctor could afford—St. Luke's decided to cap chances to help fund the procedure.

Companies and charities, including the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office St. Luke's patients, Sobrevinas's doctor friends from Cagayan de Oro, and the hospital itself chipped in.

Liver surgeon Allen Carter— chief of the Liver Transplant Surgery at St. Luke's Global City, said liver cirrhosis doesn't...Sobrevinas's situation with compatible organs...never all disqualified because of health problems.

Just as the team was about to give up, 51, Lulu's got a call from Quirino Memorial Medical Center on March 9 and was told that they had a donor with a matching liver who had died. A surgery team was immediately organized and by 11 p.m., Sobrevinas was on the operating table.

### Team of 16 doctors

A team of 16 doctors—among them four liver-transplant surgeons and two hepatologists—participated in performing 1,000 transplant- ing (liver—traveled up to seven of the next day to complete the procedure.

Sobrevinas woke up eight hours after the operation. "This is a very good sign that the liver graft was working," said Dr. Jim Marino Ong, a member of the transplant team. "We had an amazing recovery—three months after surgery."

### Discharged

Sobrevinas was discharged from the hospital on April 6 with orders to undergo treatment for Antiviral therapy for medicine schedule for check- ups. It took of drugs worth P1,500 a day), undergo regular check-ups, stick to a healthy diet and maintain regular exercise.

While confined some time here from exposure to his former work environment, the doctor, who currently stays with a companion in Ermita, Manila, wants to promote liver health and serve as an inspiration for other liver cancer patients.

"I would like to continue serving the people, especially those who have liver cancer. They should not be afraid to have an operation in the Philippines. Our doctors can do it," said Sobrevinas.

# No 'PI' in PH, US envoy tells media, guards

From page A1

Quezon City—even with a flight for- saloon of Thomas,' at entrance for the inauguration of the U.S.-funded biomedical research laboratory.

The hospital's route quite and missed several minutes before the envoy's arrival and thoroughout the office. Patients and guests had to take the longer route to get inside.

Reporters covering the delayed event were invited to the reception area with Embassy Secretary Anthony Harrison also as guest of honor.

But during the chance interview with Thomas after inaugural rites, his security aides, who were all Filipinos, roughly shoved TV cameramen to prevent them from getting too close.

An Inday colleague could not be immediately identified but who called as part of the broadcast's security also briefly prevented a cameraman from taking a better position. Embassy security also later cautioned us to also do it as a matter, I'll tell you," the official warned.

### No reason to get rough

The ambassador's security aides' had no reason to get rough because he agreed to be interviewed. After the affair as he stepped out of the emergency room lobby for a car waiting outside, Thomas was approached by reporters. "Can we ask a few questions?" one asked.

"Oh, sure, go ahead," Thomas replied.

While Thomas was giving his views about the Philippine military being perceived as the most corrupt government agency, his security escorts kept on blocking some viewers and reporters.

A female reporter who was holding a microphone in front of the ambassador felt that hands touched her chest twice as security guards pushed her more visibly. Thomas did not attack taking.

Our account kept on grappling the throat of one cameraman and pushing his camera up, that the cameraman finally blurted out an expletive or frustration.

### No case words, please

Pleading, Thomas said: "No profanities. Nothing's [_____] me."

The interview lasted only a few minutes.

"The United States has been a partner for the Armed Forces of the Philippines for many years and we will continue that partnership and seek to continue to find ways to assist the Armed Forces and the people of the Philippines, third to see you again," he told reporters.

Gaynes assisted the medical- together by leaving the hospital through another exit.

Lt. Cmdr. Jerome Oreson, chief public information officer of the AFP Medical Center, later apologized to the different print- corps for the incident.

Oreson told reporters that security escorts were just doing their job because the embassy had told them earlier there would be no interviews. He promised his staff would work with media people to avoid similar incidents in the future.

THOMAS Tagalog-speaking ambassador

# Transport strikers warned; drivers' group is unfazed

MILLIONS OF commuters in parts of the country are pondering ahead with a transport strike today to protest rising prices of fuel, but what would be their biggest consequence seem to take part in the mass action because it held sway eight days ago.

The flagging shunning Mal-shinaan (Parade) in Navotas, Metro Manila said the transport strike in the region would be peaceful.

Pinatubo Balayan, Bayan spokesperson in the region, said militants would join efforts to persuade drivers and commuters to join the strike. He said militants aren't out intimidation.

Protesters are demanding a stop to the increases in fuel prices.

"(That) is beyond the government's control," deputy presidential spokesperson Abigail Valte said at yesterday's news briefing in Malacañang, referring to the high price of fuel caused by recent events in the Middle East and North Africa.

Valte said any protest action by operators and drivers of public utility vehicles should not cause any inconvenience to the public.

### Trade

The military said it would deploy at least 95 trucks to major motorist. While Metro to to forty commuters.

Brig. Gen. Ernan Iñiri, head of the Armed Forces of the Philippines National Capital Region (AFP-NCR), the 95 trucks would provide free transport to stranded commuters going to work in the morning and leaving for home in the afternoon.

Each truck can carry about 20 passengers, Iñiri said. A total of 139 military personnel will provide security for the trucks.

Militants in southern Mindanao vow to cripple transport routes in Davao del Norte, Davao del Sur, Davao Oriental and Compostela Valley.

### Warning

Officials of the Land Transportation Franchising Regulatory Board (LTFRB) in the region warned of cancellation of franchises of operators who would join the strike.

In Davao City a spokesperson of Transportation Pinoys said his group was not armed by the LTFRB warning.

### No coordination

Militants in Bicol, however, said they were not taking part in today's strike but would hold rallies to denounce

Nora Lopez, Bayan Bicol spokesperson, said organizers of today's transport strike failed to coordinate with the local drivers' group Catodan.

Lopez said militants in Bicol launched what they described as a successful transport strike on March 16.

In Bacolod City a drivers' group said the business sector are taking part in a rally to protest prices of fuel there that are higher than those in Metro Manila.

At least 500 groups belonging to the United Drivers Organization Center (Undoc) were expected to converge at the Lapid Church compound at 1 p.m. today.

The Bacolod City government passed Ordinance 9 to close Araneta Street in front of the Fountain of Justice for its rally.

Some businessmen acknowledged that the strike will affect their operations as it coincides with the rally while cargo trucks would be at a standstill on highways in southern and northern Negros as a sign of protest, said Undoc secretary general Jose Ortega.

Ortega said the group was asking the Department of Energy to investigate what he said were the cartelized pricing of petroleum products in Negros Occidental and Bacolod, where fuel costs are P4.95 per liter higher than those in Metro Manila.

Undoc would also demand that value-added tax for petroleum products be lowered from 12 to 4 percent.

*Reports from Aaron Recuenco and Jamaine Punsalang in Manila; Orlando Dimaano and Judy Quiroz, Inquirer Mindanao; Mar S. Arguelles and Ric Assad, Inquirer Southern Luzon; and Gerry P. Gomez, Inquirer Visayas*

Mitsubishi Motors Phils. Corp., Dealers and Suppliers donates P 4M to the japan earthquake and tsunami victims

INQUIRER

# OPINION

## Poor Ping

EDITORIAL

I SHORE to heart, he said. "I can tell you new" the former fugitive and current Sen. Panfilo "Ping" Lacson told reporters a couple of days after he surrendered. "I cried my eyes out, not for me, but for my staff. Why did they have to be dragged into this?"

The question is plaintive, but it is also potent proof that Lacson has a skewed sense of justice.

Concern for the wellbeing of others, especially dependents like Lacson's Senate staff, is a natural, humane quality. That is not what we find objectionable in Lacson's statement, or in his elaborate attempt to justify his flight from justice. It is the deficient sense of consequence, the readiness to blame everyone else but one's self, that we find galling. "Why did they have to be dragged into this?" He was referring to the decision to close down his Senate office and the rebuff, in the words of the business news report, to "supposedly cut the salary of his staffers because he could not sign the paperwork."

But shouldn't the office of a senator to have to shut down, his staff told to go home, when the senator goes into hiding? That, it seems clear to us, is merely the direct consequence of the decision to run from the law.

But Lacson does not only assume that his office ought to have continued operating even while his own staff could not locate him, he also fails to recognize his own responsibility for his staff's sorry situation. "Why did they have to be dragged into this?" The ironic burden is placed on the shoulders of others.

Let us assume, for the sake of argument, that in the last months of the Arroyo administration a judiciary rabunctious persons resolved to bring Lacson to court for his alleged role in the double murder of publicist Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and his driver Emmanuel Corbito. Lacson fled the country in January last year, a month before the Manila Regional Trial Court issued a warrant for his arrest. Under Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, his perceived political enemy, Lacson may have thought not only that the odds were stacked against him, but that the legal game itself was rigged. Even assuming all this, however, the objective conditions of Lacson's legal struggle changed after Benigno Aquino III, the man Lacson supported for the presidency, came to power on June 30. At the very least, the prospect of Malacañang interference in the judicial process no longer existed. Why, then, did Lacson remain in hiding?

Because he wanted special treatment. His own answers during the first news conference he held after coming out of hiding revealed his real expectations inadvertently.

First, he expected the new administration to intervene in the legal case on his behalf. What, after all, is the underlying reasoning of his complaint— "It's said in the papers that I'm an ally but I don't feel it"—but that he expected to be treated like an ally? That is, as a fugitive who should no longer be the subject of a wide manhunt, a senator whose flight from justice the law enforcement agencies under new leadership would no longer actively pursue. What did he feel instead? "They didn't go easy on me. I can tell you that." He said he never sensed that he "was being given a fair shake by this new administration—and that is what is more painful." Painful, because he had expected otherwise.

Second, Lacson expected to fight his legal battles without the inconvenience of being detained. Even under a new administration, which in his own view he sees as aggressively anti-corruption, he declined or refused to recognize the opinion most other Filipinos charged with the non-bailable crime of murder have no choice but to accept: arguing their case from prison. Even after Arroyo had left Malacañang, Lacson continued to fight the case against him in absentia. "I was ready to spend the rest of my life in hiding," he said. "I was ready not to see my family again."

Lacson spoke often of the unfairness that had befallen him, referring to himself more than once as "a fugitive from injustice." But his definition of justice is an extraordinary one in his definition of his duties as a senator. Now that he is back, he speaks of his unmerited "obligations, not just for myself, but also for our people." But where was that sense of obligation when his case was still pending in court?

The truth is, for all Lacson's pronouncements about justice and his plea, he sees himself as requiring special treatment —and thus above the law.

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## The Flor Contemplacion syndrome

PUBLIC LIVES

*Randy David*

MANY HONORABLE people do not understand why the treatment of the entire Filipino nation have been mobilized to spend time flown to spare the lives of the three Filipinos who were rescued yesterday for the heinous crime of drug trafficking. They ask: Why are we spending precious diplomatic capital to plead for the lives of three convicted criminal offenders? Are we not being selfish in thinking only of our own nationals? Can we not also empathize with the relatives and friends whose lives have been ruined by the drugs regularly brought in to Chinese drug dealers?

There is no way of answering these questions except by referring to the obligations of solidarity.

Living as Filipinos, it is difficult to imagine anything more compelling and more important than the family ties that bind us. It is for family that our workers venture abroad in search of work, agonizing the painful separations that this necessitates. Daily, the thoughts of us in distant places enter the pain of separation. In the meantime, they try to keep relationships intact by the usually flow of remittances and telephone calls.

We say all know what our OFWs must give up in order to provide for their families. They often are even so dutiful as this less they break down. They have to be strong for the family. But no matter how well they appear it, it reflects in pain. They feel guilty for leaving their loved ones behind. And their loved ones, in turn, feel guilty for allowing them to go and for letting them carry the whole burden of keeping the family alive.

In other words, they navigate each other's pain, and, more than that, they share one another's guilt. This is the essence of solidarity. There are unconventional obligations. They are not voluntary, and do not arise simply from the needs create the good that is done or so. Such are family obligations. They have a moral dimension even when a parent or a child or a spouse has been wronged.

Indeed the obligations of solidarity go beyond the family. They make many persons to life as the spectacle of human rights violations in our communities, our school group, our union, and our people. Thus, in the events that we fail, when images overwhelm us one by family whose members, by force of circumstances, have found themselves dealing to all four corners of the world, we are commanded by a sense of solidarity to even those who happen to desire. To be indifferent is to exclude oneself from the community. That is why the need to manifest solidarity to felt most strongly by those who are perceived to represent the core religious leaders, government officials, politicians and the mass media.

The failure of the nation's leaders to recognize and to ultimately with this emotional obligations can suggest malfeasance. Whether or not the government is willing to spend time, bothering on personal, half-cocked on the nation's collective necessity is the figure of Flor Contemplacion, a domestic helper, whose conviction for murder culminated in her execution by the Singaporean government in 1991.

The public anger over the failure of the Philippine government to get the Singaporean to delay her execution and to respect her case caused a crisis in the presidency of Fidel V. Ramos. She was recalled by the ambassador to Singapore, and for the secretary of labor and the foreign secretary in order to appease the anger in the nation. A few months later, the Contemplacion syndrome gripped the nation all over again when Sarah Balabagan, a young Filipino domestic girl working in a Emirates helper in the United Arab Emirates, was sentenced to death for the killing of her employer who tried to rape her. The government, chastened by the violence of this episode, did everything to save Balabagan from execution, and she came to others paid off.

The Contemplacion case became a watershed in our nation's history as a labor-exporting country. Every succeeding administration found itself haunted by the same syndrome. It created a special sensitivity about OFW matters that made us be underlined some policy to do everything humanly possible wherever and whenever the lives of OFWs are in danger. This policy led to the withdrawal of Filipino troops from Iraq in order to save a Filipino worker from his hang abductors. It is this same policy that today compels the government to spend diplomatic to any OFW request for transfer repatriation from various nations like Libya and Japan. It is what prompted the Aquino government's spokesman to throw their hands very carefully when they say in explaining why the government did not pass Susan Ople, Sally Villanueva and Elizabeth Rosas to express sentiments. Of course, one wishes we were not merely reacting to crises that severely or unnecessarily tax our resources and to convincing our colleagues in the executive branch to find or necessary to go abroad just to mass a living.

In many ways, the moral responsibility we feel for our OFWs, including those who have been convicted for crimes abroad, is our way of making amends for our own shortcomings as a people. A moderate liberal and relatively prosperous of obligations will not understand this. It will merely highlight the fact that going abroad to work is voluntary, and that every person must take responsibility for what he consents to do. This, unbeknown is a difference. The obligations is creates, says the philosopher Michael J. Sandel, arise "from understanding ourselves as the particular persons we are—as members of this family or nation or people, as bearers of that history, as citizens of this republic."

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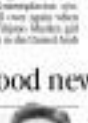
## Bad news, good news

THERE'S THE RUB

*Conrado de Quiros*



THE BAD news for the President is that her performance rating has dipped from +68 last November to +53 this March, a pretty substantial drop of 15 points. Much of it had to do with her having a Porsche. Almost half of SWS's respondents agreed with the proposition "President Aquino's purchase of an expensive car such as a Porsche, even if though he owns money, is not a good example for a president or country like the Philippines."

That's not surprising. You know there would be a backlash from it. It only shows the folly of Malacañang being proud off with sympathies like Kris Bunye aka Jinxie Dunga, who decided on the point in a YouTube presentation, giving Malacañang so glimpse the next installment of their reality show. It only shows the folly of Malacañang being proud of an expensive car such as a Porsche, even if though he owns money, it not a good example for a president or country like the Philippines.

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Frankly, I don't know how with office automatic, nobody thought to tell Bikoy what a bad idea purchasing this car was. Showing off his car is money. However it wasn't new or the latest model, however he needed a replacement for his old car, and however Noynoy Aquino can entrust the power of image. There is no arguing against it, other than another, more powerful, image. The most powerful image P-Noy can utilize he himself be using, going to the supermarket to buy his groceries, or going all the lights, is the same powerful image P-Noy now when he sat behind the wheel of this Porsche.

The Porsche by no means constantly compares to GMA: from to La Chapel to celebrate the triumph of having to with the 20 plus dots. Though that was how SWS's allies to murder made it out to be (but of course they would). La Chapel was just extravagance, and not dots, despite the outrageously unfair pronouncement of the public opinion, would not by taxpayers' money. That was how the congressman who said he's got it in the first place.

What made P-Noy's Porsche a shock is his side was quite another order of transgression. As opposition, like he said before, it's okay to ride on Mikey, or anyone among their ride. Said Jinggoy that Porsche, all the public would have said was, "At what else is new?" What made the public or up and take notice, quite apart from ambergris, was that it made P-Noy that like was over the public. Indeed, it was the expectation, and he failed there. He was in the sense the public looked up to for example, and he failed there. He was the one the public expected to pass were of character, and he failed there.

He inherently that is the good news for the President, too.

It shows in what high esteem the President is held by the public, in complete contrast with his predecessor. P-Noy's existence power much as elevated, so one would also imagine, are the dots there. He should have learned from the campaign how excessive his image is to public perception. He must be aware of the stakes his numbers, or from out of the blue (or yellow), he came by so much as to acquiring a high moral ground. He was the opposite of Gloria in the same way that his number was the opposite of Estrada's. That was what gave him impressive demand some support in the surveys, higher even when Erap were put, when he wasn't even a presidentiable yet.

Those same numbers instilled when his campaign took a detour from the high moral ground, when a forgot in Bikoy more and took out vague happings. Or to heed where little decisions ended up from dissent of the sailor going to demand campaigns in Isabayan and abolition. The same with which his numbers rose. If that campaign leader executed an Ellsworth sage to name (The making courage, making makeup" to a rendition of this, involving morality in the defining elements of the electorate), we might be looking at another president right now. Look what happened to Joe Estrada.

If that is so, then P-Noy's capacity to bounce back from the last survey is huge. It's not a sin at all, as his people say that his dip in approval from last year was to be expected, a tapering off of the euphoria. Yet, precisely because of the euphoria, he can also bounce back.

What he did't survey was action, was things he'd ever happened. The first was the appointments of Merceditas Gutierrez, which ignoring Jimmy Antonio modestly, though Gutierrez was not the only one who had a hand in the sank of the impeachment bid in Congress. Seeing as what Malacañang doesn't control it and can't even control its own people, the fates of the Senate survey underestimate the power of image. (Hilarious enough, as long will a Senate P-Noy's image, in the end, survive.

The second is the RH bill. As far, P-Noy has remained sanitized by the entanglements of the Church-supported bill. The actions of Senate Sanchez are the tally in Lenten, accompanying it. There can be an honder one of characters the P-Noy. He belongs to a family that is seemingly attached to the Catholic Church. Paying his respects with Cardinal Sin, he has invested (in moment) a rally in the Luneta in light off Health Secretary Ann Kiwter's campaign to distribute contraceptives to the masses. "Bb. Gandoon," the Church-sime derisively called Kiwter, which Kiwter humorously accepted as a compliment, outright. If he won, he was the Filipino size. This is a case where P-Noy can clear brightly by the power of example, paving the country the image of the responsible Catholic, the one who holds close both to God and to his conscience and to reality.

These are some of character that this president has better ratings, they make for a better president.

# A dime a dozen; that Porsche, again

## OUTLOOK

*Rigoberto Tiglao*

ren DIES) spoke with tears of joy, Red party director Rep. Teodoro Casiño said that the choice of Representative's [illegible] votes on March 23 to impeach Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez, representing "overwhelming public sentiment" against her.

Casiño though was mum whether the numbers, two days later, of 204 of his colleagues to have likewise voted to impeach Gutierrez (Manila also represented overwhelming public sentiment in finally ousted the dictator. He also haven't found from Casiño whether the 191 votes to postpone the impeachment trial—one of which the honorable Speaker for Muslim Mindanao—which he claimed would be a travesty of justice—represents overwhelming public sentiment.

The whole mob opinion business has rejected the justice's extraordinary (actually even that of justices who have not been Congress supreme) with the workings of the legislature to portray a treacherous against which the honorable Ombudsman has come to represent the people. This of course is part of the old trick, not panel, to depict a popular punishment against a target so that he or she will be in unprofessionally overwhelmed to just resign.

This is the same trick employed by each of the Senate in 2001, but in bringing hands that stone-manfully used by the Hyatt 10 complainers in 2003 and by unseeding anti-Arroyo rabble. Included in that unseeding was the group of the Philippine Makati Business Club and the Management Association of the Philippines against the verges in order to depict supposedly extensive justice" implosion of the "people's power." and of course, the very unlucky ex-wife of Pidal Ayala, controlled by relatives of President Aquino, which would confirm the alleged people's sentiment.

The 212 votes against Gutierrez hardly represent "overwhelming public opinion" if one is familiar with the dynamics and history of Congress. The truth of the matter is that it has been routine for the House of Representatives to vote "overwhelmingly" for bills and resolutions that are railroaded by the leadership, called the plenary session. For instance, the controversial proclamation to appoint senators to military rebels was approved by 223 votes to just 7 votes. The recent House bill prescribing a fixed term of office for the Armed Forces chief of staff passed with 226 votes to 2. And the anti-distortion report I have yet to find a bill voted on by the plenary which was not "overwhelmingly approved."

Why are House votes consistently "overwhelmingly"? It would be indeed unkind to dismiss the House's "overwhelming votes" as a dime a dozen. The Filipino constitution for that term is "dalawa singko" (two for five-centavos), although the more sophisticated use the Spanish "dos por cinco" (I have never found someone who made singko (three for five centavos) for this package the 22 March 2011 votes to impeach the ombudsman "overwhelmingly approved."

The House cabinet always votes with itself four times to one. In fact, the last time when an appointee—this House—to reject the President's nominee to the Supreme was in 1999, when the bill a declaration of the Senate itself to convince the senators not to host over the US military bases in the Philippines. The vote was 12 to 11. Since then, with each the President to—low Arroyo and administration endorsements such as some bishops defining Sec.

# PBR: dark days for consumers

THE FATES is the least of Rafael Dela Rosa. On Dec. 10, 2010, the debonair but so-called Performance Based Regulation (PBR) is "our insurance against going back to the 'days of darkness'."

Huh? I invite the attention of Dela Rosa, who has "vowed to fight for" the currency of uncertainty power users, on the following facts.

1. Since PBR was instituted, Meralco's gas (downstream) 'pseudo' distribution rates have gone up—from P0.0057 in 2009 under contestability, to P1.2227 in May 2009, to P1.4917 in May 2010, to P1.6484 this year, and to P1.6936 in 2015. That rate was P0.7087 pluck in 2003 under the Return On Rate Base (ROR).

2. Meralco's net earnings: P2.7 billion in 2008; P4 billion in 2009; load P12 billion in 2010. In 2011, thanks to PBR, Meralco penned an 80 percent surge in profits on a 3 percent growth in economic base, and 11 percent increase in sales volume (gwh).

3. "PBR," according to Dela Rosa, "allows ERC to look forward and make investments." That is the curse of PBR. Instead of the low-or-delayed cost-recovery mechanism, PBR is a revenue-setting platform where all projected costs over a five-year period are set in advance, investments approved, profits allowed, the consumer-paying share is set toward an ebony projections. We are now entering the third regulatory period, so we know and expect an audit of the first and second. Do you still wonder why Meralco's distribution rates are on a projected up-and, and to-profits, every year?

4. Meralco's annual revenue requirements from 2012 to 2015 under PBR: P52 billion, P54.9 billion, P58.2 billion and P60 billion, respectively. Of the amount, the operating expenses for the same periods are P26.5 billion, P28 billion, P29.6 billion and P21.4 billion, respectively. The provision for dividends, interest and taxes is expected for the same period: P25.3 billion, P24.6 billion, P25.2 billion and P26.8 billion; now of dividends and returns is P7 billion higher than the operating expenses every year, thanks to PBR.

5. Under PBR, Meralco claims a capital expense of P45 billion. Energy Regulatory Commission ordered this to P36 billion. But Gene Lanillon, a consumer opponent to PBR...says a 'should only be P1.09 billion, given that Meralco's projected sales growth is only 650 gwh per year over four years. Four if Meralco will sell an additional 3 billion kilowatt per year from its present level of 28 to 30 billion kwh, this investment we are being asked to pay—P 11 billion to P 12 billion annually or P40 billion over four years—to supposedly incremental, where we will be spending P11 to P12 pluckers purchase the additional power that Meralco will sell as P1.09 pluck, compared to the high-rate distribution rate be 26 25.

6. PBR has narrowed the corporate income tax of Meralco as a non-issue now, at least as far as Napoleon Cruz—who in 2003 and 2004 char disallowed this in strong self-interested rhetoric. How can PBR deter and modify this decision? Dela Rosa should join me once for the captive customers of Meralco, whom he has vowed to fight for.

—ROMEO L. BAÑAS
pbb.romeo@yahoo.com

## Walking political ads a common sight all over PH

THE HUNDREDS of thousands of human stench, jocular clowns and street campaigns all over the Philippines are being explained by politicians as walking advertisements. Instead of being bearing a politician's name, stapled with his/her provincial political dynasty, are used to commit this crime to violation of the human rights of these clueless citizens.

Adding insult to injury is the prohibition in the Inquirer budget to use funds from the allowances for "supplies" for proper named services, which are supposed to display only the names of the Inquirer and the mind, the proper identification.

I once overheard a friend by a named barangay official wherein the tuition were reduced to provide "salitang" homes. The tuition were in uniform with a resident politician's name on it from one of the beds, and his face on the breast pockets. To all appearances, the tuition were the private money of the politician and not the employer of the Inquirer which is supposed to be the people's own?

I urge the Department of the Interior and Local Government to issue a directive prohibiting Inquirer from accepting donations of uniforms bearing the names of the donors, and promoting the Inquirer to purchase uniforms under "supplies" in their budget. This will help to campaign not competent in the Inquirer.

—ATTY. ROMEO L. BENEDICO
Brgy. Kapitolyo Pasig
mabenedicto@yahoo.com

# Japan to carpet nuke plant grounds with resin to block radiation

TOKYO—Workers at Japan's stricken Fukushima nuclear power plant plan to spray its grounds with a special resin to prevent further radioactivity being released, a nuclear safety agency official said on Wednesday.

Faced with an unprecedented crisis, authorities are grappling to control four crippled reactors that have been leaking dangerous radiation after a March 11 earthquake and tsunami knocked out their cooling systems.

Officials are considering a variety of tactics after efforts to cool the reactors with massive amounts of water led to dangerous side effects, as the spent fuel has flooded areas outside and many men into the ocean and soil.

In the latest attempts to bring the disaster under control, workers will on Thursday begin to carpet two-thirds of the plant's 1.5 hectares of grounds with resin, the official said.

"The aim is to block radioactive materials from spreading into the air and morning sill into the ocean," he said. "It will be experimental so we're unsure of how much effect it will have."

He declined to provide details about the resin, but according to local media it is a watery solution normally used to spray roads to allow dust to settle.

Officials are also installing covering sheets over and fitting air filters to limit radiation, the nuclear safety agency official said.

LONE FIGHT A man is treated for possible nuclear radiation at an evacuation center in Fukushima, northern Japan, on Wednesday. Japan appeared resigned on Monday to a long fight to contain the world's most dangerous atomic crisis in 25 years after high radiation levels complicated work at its crippled nuclear plant. The crisis on the ocean did not show any harmful radiation levels. AGENCIES

Another plan was to sprinkle an empty boiler off Reactor No. 2, so that workers can pump several Olympic swimming pools' worth of highly radioactive water into it. And, the daily said, piling up natural government officials.

### Meltdown in progress?

While the government did not explicitly confirm the report, Chief Cabinet Secretary Yukio Edano said Japan's handling nuclear experts were discussing "every possibility including those mentioned in the press."

With crucial control room functions still disabled, experts are not sure exactly is happening inside the reactors—and some international experts have issued dire warnings that a meltdown may already be in progress.

One of them is Michael Lyons, who was head of safety assessment for building atomic reactors at General Electric, before it controlled the Fukushima units, and who was quoted by Britain's Guardian newspaper.

Available readout and radiation data from the specialist Guardian said 2 "suggest that the core has melted through the bottom of the pressure vessel" and entry the concrete floor, he was quoted as saying by the daily. "I hope I am wrong, but that is certainly what the evidence is pointing towards."

In Washington, saying US nuclear specialists in the Department of Energy's Office of Nuclear Energy, Peter Lyons, told reporters on Tuesday that "current information suggests that the plants are in a slow recovery."

"However, long-term cooling of the reactor and spent pools is essential during this period and fuss are been adequately assessed to date, to the best of my knowledge. A massive cleanup operation obviously remains for the future."

### Robots from US

The United States has lent Japan robots of a model battle-tested in Iraq and Afghanistan that can navigate cities and clear rubble in the event the reactor buildings, which humans cannot enter because of very high radiation levels.

France, which relies on nuclear power for three-quarters of its energy needs, was sending an expert team from Areva, its atomic energy arm, on Wednesday it was time to think outside the box.

"We are in an unprecedented situation, so we need to think about different strategies, be open and when we normally think about," the official told AFP.

### Radioactive runoff

Japan faces a dilemma in containing the nuclear crisis: it must pump water into reactors to stop them from overheating, even as highly radioactive runoff leaks out, hobbling crucial clean-up efforts and threatening the environment.

Earlier 231 detected in Pacific Ocean water near the plant site surged. In a new high of 3,355 times the legal limit, officials said—compared to the previous top level of 1,850 times the legal minimum three days ago.

"The figures are rising further," said nuclear safety agency spokesperson Hidehiko Nishiyama. "We need to find out as quickly as possible the cause and stop them from rising any higher."

Radioactive steam has also wafted into the air, contaminating regional farm and dairy products, and last week led to evacuation orders in areas as far as Tokyo, 200 kilometers to the southwest.

Japanese authorities have repeatedly stressed that none of the affected food products or drinking water have reached supermarkets thereat to human health, and that some concerns will dilute radioactivity in the sea. AFP

# Pinoys 'Jam for Japan' in Manila, Baguio, San Francisco on April 1

From page A1

Lim Viray, head of the Philippine International Jazz Foundation, which initiated the musical fundraiser, went on stage to announce that it was all systems go for "Jam for Japan," a benefit concert for victims of the earthquake and tsunami that hit the Land of the Rising Sun on March 11.

Featuring some 30 performers, to be simultaneously run for six hours, "Jam for Japan" will be staged tomorrow, starting at 6 p.m. at the Ayala Museum on Makati Avenue.

Simultaneously, a "Jam for Japan" will be held at The Red Lion Pub in Ilus, 92 Governor Lim, Leonard Wood Road in Baguio City tomorrow.

### Generous backstory

Still another "Jam"—date and venue to be announced later—is being announced in San Francisco, California, spearheaded by Filipino musicians Carlos Zalaida, executive director of the San Francisco Peace Jazz Fest.

Manila, Baguio and San Francisco of course share a common backstory that is not lost on the organizers: all three cities had been hit by killer quakes.

Leading the lineup for the Ayala Museum show are the pop trio, or group The Company, multi-awarded singer Jaline, and young amateur singer-songwriter Marie Digby, whose mother is Japanese. Digby happened to be in the country when the concert was being planned last week.

Also in the artists' roster are Absolute Zero, Albert de Ocio, Baked Livers, Bugs Carabes, Cajun Cat, Eileen Stein & Cameron, Ricardo de Ocampo, Freddie Cortiza, Foxet Lipata, Fuzzbuckets, Jamie Wilkes, JPR & Jam, Jun Lim-Ferry, Ric de Castro, Luis Gaisano, Mel Orosa, Miguel & Evelyn Arcasa, with Apparels, The Late Jaded, Mr. Shoes, Mondo and Uncle, Niño Mendoza & the Blue Jean Junkies, Norman Londoñeng, Pat Castillo, Phrehorn, Rarenoid de la Peña, Seth and Yuji Ivamoto.

"The performers and venues are secondary to the objective of the concert, which is to do something worthwhile to help Japan."

All performers have pledged to play for free. "Many of them told me they were just waiting for me to go through which they could help Japan," said Viray.

The idea for the benefit shows was brought up by jazz singer Evelyn Arcasa, who was in Tokyo when the twin disasters struck. "I called to ask how she was," recalled Viray. "She said, quite casually, 'there is not a food outlet open in the whole Ginza district.'"

Arcasa's description of the scene initially "doesn't seem to be a crisis," but it was "very apparent" Viray said, when told about "how far-reaching."

ABS-CBN signed on to be a media sponsor; its music channel, Myx, has been plugging tomorrow's show and is doing a full coverage. MBC, Japan's national broadcasting network, is sending a team as well.

But even as Viray and her team received internet support, dismay notes on Facebook for mounting the show this same message was posted, too: "Japan is a serious city. Why not help your fellow countries who don't have gaps? Manuka pilandi?"

The remark naturally provoked diverse reactions. Thankfully, those who felt offended kept their cool and ignored the message altogether.

"Wow ama's pinoys ayaw pa mag-share sa kapwa," said Viray, who considers the remark "insensitive." Yes, Japan is a rich country. But if ordinary Australians in times of you, would you ask about their person's financial situation before offering your hand?

Proceeds from the "Jam for Japan" at Ayala Museum is P800. All proceeds go to the Japan Red Cross Society through the Japan Foundation, Manila. Call 757-7117 loc. 10 or 219. Donations will also be accepted during the show.

# *Bali, Makati bomber arrested in Pakistan*

From page A1

three others have made a high-profile terrorist could have easily moved around.

"This proves that Mindanao is not a safe haven for foreign terrorists," said Lt. Col. Antonio Felipen, head of the AFP Western Command.

News of his arrest came Tuesday from two intelligence officials in Indonesia and the Philippines. Both spoke on condition of anonymity, citing the sensitivity of the information.

Philippine military spokesperson, Lt. Col. Arnulfo Burgos, said on Wednesday he had received similar reports from the Pakistani government.

Indonesia's top police detective, Ito Sumardi, said Pakistan authorities would be sure to "coordinate to make sure they" didn't arrest the wrong man."

He also wanted to know how Patek, the country's most wanted terror suspect, got past immigration officials.

It's not clear if Pakistan stumbled on him or if his capture was the result of an intelligence tip.

Details about what Patek was doing in Pakistan like its exact whereabouts, training sparked considerable debate whether to plan an attack until al-Qaeda's top operational leaders as the 10th anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks looms near the United States.

Patek, 40, a Jemaah Islamiyah man, is well known to intelligence agencies across the world. He's believed to have served as the group's deputy field commander in the Bali nightclub bombings that left 202 people dead, many of them foreigners.

He's also suspected in at least two other, far less deadly suicide bombings, in Jolo in in 2003 and 2004.

The United States was offering a $1 million reward for the capture of Abdul Basit Patek—who's known as the "Bible Arab"—in the Bali bombings. Seven of the victims were Americans.

Patek is believed to have been receiving a package of bombmaking materials sent Filipinos who traveled to Afghanistan and Pakistan during the 1980s and 1990s for training and fighting.

### Victory against terrorism

On their return to Southeast Asia, they formed Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), blamed for a string of suicide bombings that jolted populist hubs, restaurants, hotels and a Western embassy in Indonesia. Together more than 200 people have died.

Patek fled to the southern Philippines after the Bali bombings, seeking refuge and training with both the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, the largest Muslim separatist group, and Jemaa Islamiyah, a terrorist group that reportedly fled to Mindanao in 2003, where they reportedly joined the the bomb group Abu Sayyaf.

On Oct. 7, 2005, Sec. Hernando Perez of the Philippine National Police offered $10 million for the head of Patek and Dulmatin, one of the alleged masterminds, and $1 million for Patek, who was believed to have acted as assistant to the field commander of the bombings.

Patek was reported killed in an August 2006 clashes Basilan, but early this year, he was linked to the Jan. 15 Zamboanga City bombing. Makati City Mayor Jejomar Binay was also a target.

### India on the trail of bombers

"It's more than anyone else will have information about the nature and extent of links between the Philippines and Indonesia's Jemaah Islamiyah," Jones, of the International Crisis Group.

"He will be able to give detailed info on the Indonesian and Malaysian skill operating in Mindanao, and where their financing comes from and who supports them," Jones said.

"He will be able to explain what the nature of linkages is between Malaysian, and Southeast groups more generally, with Abu Sayyaf," Jones continued, "and that's a real piece of the puzzle that we don't have been able to understand thus far."

### Where's he?

The question of what to do with Patek—whether to try him or release him—could become a key indicator of how US President Barack Obama will handle major terrorist suspects captured abroad. However, American officials declined to comment on the case.

Today former President George W. Bush, is likely would have been spared into the CIA's network of secret prisons. For instance, one of Bush's increased accomplishments in the nightclub bombing, Hambali, spent years in the prison system and is now being held in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

But the CIA's secret prisons are closed and Obama is trying to empty Guantanamo, and all new suspects. *All with reports from Reuters and Dona Z. Pazzibugan*

## WHAT WENT BEFORE

ON OCT. 12, 2002, the tourist island of Bali was terrorized and rocked by a massive explosion from a car bomb that destroyed a popular nightclub and killed at least 200 people.

Many of the victims of the blast—described by the investigators as the "worst act of terror" in the country's history—were foreign tourists, mostly Australian.

Blamed for the bombing were Indonesian Islamic militants Imam Samudra (who goes by one name) and Amrozi Nurhasyim. Both members of the al-Qaeda-linked Jemaah Islamiyah group, they had reportedly fled to Mindanao in 2003, where they reportedly joined the the bomb group Abu Sayyaf.

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*Inquirer Research/ Alan Jude Angeles Archives*

INQUIRER Southern Luzon

# Island read-along tells of love of nature

By Marivic Belzunce
Cagraray Island, Albay

TO CHILDREN of the island-paradise of Cagraray in Albay's eastern coast, nothing can be more real than stories about the environment.

The abundant natural wonders that surround them—blooming trees and wild animals—are storybook characters they see, feel and touch every day.

But no matter how familiar these are, the children listened intently to the characters of Banggik Bayanah, Talampka and Tagak in the nature-themed bayanihan Read-Along session held at Cagraray Eco-Energy Hub on Saturday.

Sponsored by Sunwest Global Logistics Control and Sunwest Group Holding Co. Inc., the event aimed to teach children the love of reading and care for the environment.

Overlooking the Albay Gulf and the shores of Cagraray, the park's bamboo chapel became a unique venue for storytelling to some 50 pupils from Manito Elementary School. (The read-along session was initially planned to be held outdoors, but the place has to be changed because of the daylong heavy downpour.)

Talking animals, a lazy, three-brain and five-little-pieces vampire were the main characters in the stories read by socials and personalities in Bicol—Dr. Tita Lea Duran Lanuza, president of Bicol University; Jocelyn Somalpa; Mayon Lund Inc. president; and Jessa Sto. Reyes, young conservationist-in-the-making.

### Encouraging children

Lanuza, whom the children called Tita Tay, read "Bakunan," a story rooted in the 2006 Mass Philippine Early Intensive Catherine Damitan and Bruno Gaa Incantacio, and children's book writer Elsie Astrid Tolosa.

"Bakunan" tells the story of how three summits realized the importance of taking care of the environment particularly the bakunan or mangroves.

Lanuza, who donned a hat decorated with small branches of mangrove trees while telling the story, encouraged the children to love the natural environment particularly the bakunan as she instilled in the young listeners' minds the importance of reading, especially to others.

She challenged the children to study harder for them to get a good college education.

"Tanong Inghan'dak si Ang Tabong Dangan" is an enchanting tale which the children also loved.

Clad in a fairy-like headband and holding a wand, Somalpa read the story of a fairy who gave three children a house to create they refused to take care of the environment.

CHAPEL READING Dr. Patricia Portia Lanuza, president of Bicol University, reads "Bakunan" to children of Cagraray Islands Barangay, Albay

which was popularized by man and speaks about care for Mother Earth.

"I learned the importance of taking care of the environment," Joshua Garcia, 11, a student of Bicolano Unit Foundation, said in Bicol.

### Environment rangers

Yes, who treated Germany as recipient of an award for being one of the top four cities of future, read "The Little Green Rangers' Adventure: Ang Kapakilaan ng Bakunan."

Previous to Bayot's top seven Christopher M. Millions of Ilhas Visayas State University, the story teaches kids how they can help protect and preserve the environment in simple ways.

"I've read this story to a group of kids before and critiqued their manner is really like a lecturer they are already aware of the environmental issues presented," Yes said.

Jennifer Dayto, 12, said she was fascinated by the superhero characters who wanted to protect Mother Earth.

Yes, in some parts of the story, picked up the listeners to sit down and asked questions, which they answered with enthusiasm.

"I want children to realize that as their young age, they can already do big things for the environment. Our effort to control nature is not measured by our size or age," Yes said.

Radio Iloilo, an environmental radio show which seeks to promote environmental initiatives and awareness in Bicol, is Bel's project during the Bayot awards.

### Collaborative effort

Ariel Cuban, president of Bicol Club of Cagraray Island, said his group cooperated the activity to awaken the interest of young people in reading.

He also noticed that the Earth Hour would be celebrated on the same day so we decided to support an environment-themed read-along," Cuban said.

Club members also planned later now the read-along ate and lighted candles at night in observance of the international Earth Hour.

# Plan to cut old 'pili' trees alarms environmentalists

By Ma' L. Arguillas
Legazpi City

IF BICOL can declare its own symbolic tree, it must be the pili, dubbed the region's "tree of hope" which bears its most famous nut.

But in Guinobatan in Albay province, 150 pili trees will have to "die" soon for being "unproductive," to the horror and dismay of environmentalists in the province.

Described as "old growth" or aged over 20 years old and past their bearing years, the trees are found in Barangay Calzadahan.

Members of the Indigenous Group Manide of Barangay (Group) are alarmed after being informed that the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (Cenro) in Guinobatan gives a go-signal to cut the old trees.

They say they will contest the issuance of the permit, pointing out that the cutting of old trees will hurt the biodiversity and ecosystem of the non-ecologic dust, among others, enhance the watershed system, give sanctuary to birds and are an assured seed banks for local fauna and flora.

With climate change a major concern we should avoid the reverse conversion aims in Bicol region and in many areas across Bicol, trees are needed in flood control mechanisms, and pili is among those proven to resist typhoons, Jesus Dilles, the Iroro head, says in an e-mailed statement.

### No permit yet

Nicanor Cabanacan, Cenro officer in-charge, denies that he had already issued a permit to cut the 150 trees in a plantation owned by Sara Bondoc de Tabaco a resident of Barangay Bagul, Bacon District, Sorsogon City.

Cabanacan says it was the owner who sought the permit, but his office has yet to decide the matter. Before, he says, should first check her papers.

Also, Cenro must follow standard procedures, such as site inspection by a multisectoral group and a certification from a concerned agency that indeed the trees to be cut are old and unproductive.

Pili trees which are classified "old" are more than 20 years old, was past maturity and no longer productive, according to Cristino Barco Jr., a forester of the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office.

### Raw material

But the Iroro does not believe that the planted trees are no longer productive.

Other says these still have seeds known as "Bikolic ekstak," is expected to be pitted and "extracted." The trees also give roughness and elasticity to pharmaceutical products, such as plasters, and is an important material for printing inks, lithographic works and perfumery, according to the Iroro.

In the Philippines, it is used in torches to elicit hair for dreams use, candle boats and dyes of brightness bulbs and conveyors, Dilles says.

Although regarded as a major forest product, the Manide claim trees is dollar poorer for the country. In 2006, 153,415 kilograms of the commercial valued at P147,000 were exported to France, Japan, Spain, Switzerland and the United States, the Iroro says.

The group has forwarded a letter to Dr. Ernesto Ayuzan II, Ella, a scientist from the Forest Product Research and Development Institute of the Department of Science and Technology, found in Los Baños in Laguna, strongly endorsing the issuance of the permit and requesting to review its issuance.

"As one of the most authoritative voice in the pili industry, we are earnestly seeking for your crucial opinion regarding the issue," the letter says.

The letter has also forwarded of the letter to the Bicol Regional Pili Board, chaired by Dr. Emily D. Ombis, and the Department of Agriculture.

### Tree of life

The pili industry thrives only in Bicol. Products made from its fruit seed—from simply roasted nuts to its oil for cooking dressings—have become a major source of livelihood for many families in the region.

Pili products were not only the usual pasalubong for visitors but are also found in supermarket shelves nationwide.

Pili Growers Center Bicol, Inc. is tentatively classified as dispo, but is popularly called pili nut, according to a brochure prepared by the Bicol Consortium for Agriculture and Resources Research and Development.

The hard-shelled fruit at 4 to 7 centimeters long and changes its color from green to purplish black upon maturity. It contains a whitish fleshy seed that encases two kernels. The kernel, or nut, is the main product in processed crispy pili, tart, salted or roasted pili and other food items.

### Many uses

But pili has more uses than just processing as used for food.

It may used by the "two-million uses of life" because of its many uses. The Brochure regard it as their "tree of hope" because Bicol an potential processing and utilization, possibilities in food, feed, industrial uses. Each and bundles of material from every part of the tree, the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resources Research and Development (PCAARRD) says.

The development of pili products is a major endeavor in Bicol, which has accounted for at least 80 percent of production since 2005.

The PCAARRD says that as of 2006, among the provinces in the region, Sorsogon had the biggest number of fruit bearing trees (488,278), followed by Albay (80,606).

Pili nuts are exported to the United States, France, Germany, Britain, Japan, China and Hong Kong, it says.

### Landmarks

Reynaldo Fullerton, president of Pilipinas Makiri Association Inc., an environmental organization in Buhi on Iriro in Sorsogon, also expresses alarm over the planned cutting of 200 old, growth trees.

The move is contrary to Presidential Proclamation 1037 that declares a total log ban in the entire country, Fullerton says.

In Buhi on, hundreds of old-growth pili trees abound, and are seen not since these have been considered landmarks and legacy trees, he says. These contribute to the biodiversity of Buhi on and are one of the best visual enhancers of the place, he says.

Assistant Editor Tony Bergonia

Across the NATION

# Chinese poachers now in Puerto jail

## 'Harshest' penalty sought vs violators earlier mistaken for Vietnamese

By Roberto O. Anda
Inquirer Southern Luzon

PUERTO PRINCESA City—Law enforcers here are determined to obtain the highest penalty possible for six Chinese fishermen caught poaching off the waters of Palawan's southernmost town of Balabac on Thursday afternoon.

"We will throw the book at them and seek the harshest possible penalty for illegal fishing and illegal entry," said Sinforoso Anacleto, officer-in-charge of the navy's Western Command based in this city.

The Chinese poachers were erroneously reported as Vietnamese earlier by the police chief of Balabac.

Although military and police officials here expressed determination to obtain the highest penalty meted out on the Chinese, they also responded quickly to possible threats to the poachers in the wake of a national outrage over the execution of three overseas Filipino workers in China for drug trafficking.

**Preventing trouble**

At the Palawan provincial jail here, where the six Chinese fishermen are detained, authorities have separated them from the rest of the Filipino inmates yesterday in anticipation of a possible backlash from the environment.

"They were committed to us as one by one they arrived from Balabac (on Saturday). They are now under maximum security," provincial jail warden Ramon Tapiru told the Inquirer yesterday.

He said the Chinese detainees were "placed under separate confinement in maximum security just to prevent trouble."

Authorities said they were concerned that allowing the Chinese nationals to mingle with Filipino inmates "might spark violent reactions" like Wednesday's execution by lethal injection of the three overseas Filipino workers.

**No leniency**

Sabban, however, said he won't allow the Chinese poachers to be treated with the same leniency that had been extended to previous Chinese detainees as a result of lobbying by the Chinese government.

"I am aware of what had happened to previous ones against Chinese poachers but this time we will pursue this case to the maximum," Sabban said.

Environmental groups have logged at least 21 cases of poaching involving mostly Chinese and Vietnamese nationals over the last 10 years.

On Wednesday morning, a third case for violation of the Philippine Wildlife Act was filed against the men detained Chinese nationals.

The charges were in addition to cases of illegal fishing under Philippine fisheries laws filed against the Chinese.

**Police mistake**

The Chinese fishermen are facing a maximum penalty of 12 years if convicted, according to authorities.

They were arrested last March 24 by a team composed of members of the maritime police, naval forces of the Western Command and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources in an area close to Batasa Island in Balabac, a town that faces the South China Sea.

The Chinese were identified in the charge sheets as: Li Chenfu, 28; Li Yan Chun, 36; He Zhong Biao, 36; Hu Hang Long Sr., 35; and two minors aged 14 and 17 years old.

**CROWD CONTROL**
A lone policeman stands behind a growing crowd of spectators that gathered to watch the rescue parades of the Bagobo Flower Festival, highlighting the lack of manpower of police forces not only in Bagobo but elsewhere.

## DOST promotes P6 way to kill mosquitoes, fight dengue

By Maurice Malanes
Inquirer Northern Luxon

LA TRINIDAD, Benguet—Controlling dengue fever, one of the country's deadly diseases, could soon be achieved using new technology that applies what scientists know about the reproductive cycle and behavior of female mosquitoes.

Scientists from the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) have discovered that female mosquitoes are attracted to the specific scent of ovule objects they find suitable for hosting their eggs.

This understanding led researchers of the DOST's Industrial Technology Development Institute to develop the OL (ovicidal/larvicidal) trap, which stops the reproduction cycle of dengue-carrying Aedes Aegypti mosquitoes.

Bob Ladiad, DOST Cordillera director, turned over thousands of OL traps to Benguet Gov. Nestor Fongwan and La Trinidad Mayor Gregorio Aludas on Tuesday to be finished to Barangay Puis, the village with the most dengue cases in 2010.

The OL trap is made of a black plastic cup, a one-inch by five-inch strip of tissue mask, and the OL solution.

Two hundred fifty milligrams of tap water is poured into the black cup, which is mixed with a sachet of OL pellets. The mask is dipped into the cup, with its rough surface extended out.

Ladiad said the pellets mix into a chemical catalyst harvested solution, which kills mosquito larvae.

The solution exudes the same scent that lures mosquitoes to their natural nesting places, in this case, the rough-edged mask of wood.

The catch is highly absorbent, and the solution ends up incorporating the whole mixture upon which mosquitoes lay eggs.

The eggs and the hatched larvae (also called "wigglers") die as soon as these are exposed to the solution.

Ladiad said the OL trap is the cheapest technology ordinary households could use today and is cheaper and more effective than bagging mosquitoes, which some local government officials have been using. A sachet of the OL pellet is worth P6.

## Measles vaccine campaign targets 1.5M children

By Carla Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—The Department of Health is targeting 1.5 million children in Western Visayas for a door-to-door measles rubella immunization campaign.

Dr. Bonifacio Bayoa, DOH regional medical coordinator, on Tuesday said the immunization campaign would cover a million children aged 9 months to 7 years old nationwide.

Of the 1.5 million children target beneficiaries, at least 500,000 are in Negros Occidental, Bayoa said at a press conference on the campaign at Orchard here.

She cited the importance of a second round of immunization for measles-rubella to protect children and to prevent any outbreak of measles in poor communities.

The Philippines has committed to eliminate measles in 2012, the target date agreed upon with other countries in the Western Pacific region, Bayoa said.

The annual coverage for routine measles vaccination for infants aged 9 to 11 months has never reached its target of at least 95 percent, a DOH report showed.

The highest coverage ever attained was 92 percent and the lowest coverage was 67 percent, it said.

The monthlong measles rubella immunization campaign would start on April 4 and seeks to achieve a 95 percent success rate, Bayoa said.

From January to February this year, at least 12 confirmed cases of measles were reported in Western Visayas but none was reported in Negros Occidental, she added.

## UN team in ARMM to check good news on projects

COTABATO CITY—A United Nations team is now validating reports of improvements in the use of foreign aid by the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao despite the region's reputation as a graft-ridden beneficiary of billions of pesos of government funds.

Ambassador Jorge Eduardo Chew Chairperson of the World Food Program, said he said rains other executives from the United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef), United Nations Development Programme and other UN agencies are in town to validate reports that UN-funded projects in ARMM were having positive impacts on people's lives.

"Our people on the ground have seen marked improvement. It's quite satisfactory," Chew said after meeting with Chairperson and during a visit here Tuesday.

In a meeting with ARMM officials also on Tuesday, Jean Wetterwald, Southeast Asia coordinator of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, said the UN officials were also "impressed by the sincerity and commitment of the incumbent ARMM officials to develop the region and its people."

Wetterwald said the UN wanted to see a continued momentum toward that goal.

ARMM Executive Secretary Naguib Sinarimbo said regional officials have focused the early recovery of war-ridden areas in the region because of the programs being funded by the UN. Charito C. Arbasa, Inquirer Mindanao

## 'Panaad': Beyond the glitz, focus on food security

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—The Panaad sa Negros Festival, Negros Occidental's biggest yearly feast, is going beyond glitz and entertainment this year by focusing on food security and environmental protection.

Negros Occidental Gov. Alfredo Marañon Jr. said on Monday that as an agricultural province, Negros Occidental must play on its strengths by excelling in food production through improved harvests and organic farming.

The Panaad sa Negros Festival, which would be held at the Panaad Park and Stadium in Barangay Mandalagan, this city, from April 4 to 9, would stress the importance of agriculture.

Marañon hinoguid, Panaad fun-fest sa sanayan silanson, sand lesabrasis Hinoghoot Negros have pat sangbo-an on good harvests.

**HOMETOWN** *Snapshot*

A beauty contest in connection with the Panaad would showcase skills in producing crafts instead of the usual swimsuit and dance numbers, according to pageant organizer AJ Melgar.

But the first time in 10 years, the festival would pay tribute to farmers, fishermen and growers of livestock and poultry, which would be the highlight of the program on April 9.

An evaluation team has gone around towns and cities in the province to determine who would be honored for their contributions to the province's food sufficiency program, Marañon said.

The festival will feature a display of the best products of the province's towns and cities in their pavilions.

The festival's focus on food security and protection of the environment was reflected in its theme, "Harvest of Negros, Wealth of the Nation," Marañon said.

However, festival goers could still look forward to street parties although the province said he wanted the festival to focus this time on the need for greater awareness on food production and security as the key to a better life for the province's people.

DELICACIES and tourist attractions in Silay City are displayed inside a pavilion built on top of a hilly section of the Panaad Park in Barangay Mandalagan, Bacolod City.

**Sweet revenge: Cavs turn back Heat**

CLEVELAND—LeBron James' triple-double was not enough to help Miami overcome the feisty Cleveland Cavaliers, who beat the playoff bound Heat 103-96 on Tuesday. James, who left Cleveland last season to join Miami as a free agent and was roundly booed by the crowd again—he first returned home last December—ended with 27 points, 12 assists and 10 rebounds. Reuters

Editor Teodoro S. Matsunaga
Assistant Editor Francis T. J. Ochoa

SPORTS

# Azkals kick off World Cup dream in Sri Lanka

By Cordell P. Tupas

FOR THE Philippines, the long climb to football heaven—the 2014 World Cup in Brazil—begins with a duel against Sri Lanka.

Bidding to crash football's shangrila for the first time, the Azkals were pitted against a rough Sri Lankan team in the first round of the qualifiers that will be played in a home-and-away series starting June 20.

Sri Lanka will host the first leg on June 20 with the return leg set in the Philippines five days later.

Philippine Football Federation president Mariano "Nonong" Araneta is eyeing the 62nd Memorial Stadium as a possible site for the home match.

Middle East powerhouse Kuwait awaits the survivor of the Philippines-Sri Lanka duel in the second round.

Philippine team officials, led by manager Dan Palami and German coach Michael Weiss, welcomed the pairing with Sri Lanka, which is ranked 22 places lower than the Azkals at 173 in the latest FIFA rankings.

But Palami, who was at the opening of the Suzuki Cup Under-23 Championship in Los Baños, Laguna, where the draw was conducted at the Asian Football Confederation office in Sri Lanka Wednesday, warned his ads not to be complacent, saying that the Sri Lankans cannot be taken for granted.

"We have our work cut out for us," Palami told the Inquirer over the phone. "We cannot look past Sri Lanka despite its ranking."

The Philippines has never gotten past the first round of the World Cup qualifiers and Palami said the Azkals are targeting to reach the third round this year.

Azkals skipper Aly Borromeo described the outcome of the draw as "positive."

"I think it's a team similar to Bangladesh," said Borromeo, describing the Sri Lankans. "Physically we will be in superior against them."

The Azkals shot out Bangladesh, 3-0, in the Challenge Cup qualifiers last week in Yangon, Myanmar.

The Sri Lankans have shown their quality in the Asian level, beating hosts Bangladesh and Guinea-Taipei in recent years. They also drew against former Challenge Cup champion Tajikistan, 2-2, last year.

# Nationals nail semifinal slot

By Jane Meneses

MARCUS DOUTHIT returned from a slight ankle sprain to power Smart Gilas Philippines to an emphatic 111-104 win over Barangay Ginebra and an automatic semifinal slot last night in the PBA Commissioner's Cup at Ilocos Norte Coliseum.

Unstoppable in the paint, the 6-foot-10 Douthit unloaded 34 of his 30 points in the fourth quarter to iconic repeated roller by Gilas, which fueled by so many as 19 points in the second period.

"My simply showed character in difficult moments," said coach Rajko Toroman after Smart Gilas nailed the first of two outright wins in the best-of-five semifinal.

With a 7-1 record, Smart Gilas will wrap up its elimination-round campaign in a rare home-and-away against the Meralco Bolts in Tuesday (28) on Saturday.

"We will play Meralco the same way we played today," said Toroman.

The Kings, who fell to 5-3 after winning four straight, could still clinch an automatic semifinal berth if they subdue Talk 'N' Text by at least four points and force a triple-tie situation with Meralco at 8-3.

A victory by the Tropang Texters over Derby Ace in their next game, however, would erase that possibility.

Alpha Bangura scored 23 points and Jireh Don Escoresca added 20 and the10 knocked Slivnicks out of the playoffs with a 118-103 victory in the other game.

The Express ended their first back-to-back wins of the conference and improved to 3-4 in a tie with Rain Or Shine while the Slivnicks fell to defeated their sixth defeat in eight games.

MARCUS DOUTHIT of Smart Gilas (left) proves too tough—and too large—to handle for Rudy Hackett and Barangay Ginebra. JAMES ALCOY

# C. Lhuillier, FCA target tie for lead

By Jasmine W. Payo

CERDAÑA LHUILLIER and FCA seek a share of the Group B lead when they tangle in the PBA D-League Foundation Cup today at the San Juan gym.

The Gems and the Cultivators clash at 4 p.m. with the winner snatching the 2-1 record of idle Cebuana.

Meralco and Bank of Commerce-Iligan try to bounce back from a first set-back into second spot in Group A at 2 p.m.

"It's going to be tough going up against cream-and-green being coached by a veteran bench tactician," said FCA coach Jerwin Domogan.

Cebuana Lhuillier coach Luigi Trillo, also an Alaska assistant in the PBA, said his Gems need to match-out for the FCA trio of Alfred Gorilla, Ruffy Tolentino and Alex Mallari.

"They're a more established team," Trillo said of the Cultivators. "They're very well-coached and they're playing at their highest level."

# *Top Rank gets arbiter's nod*

By Ramon Hatchinsky

AN ARBITER ruled in favor of Top Rank yesterday in the losing world's battle against Ilocos Boy Pinoncanon for the rights to promoter Brenda Donaire Jr.

Former judge Daniel Wenceslao, the respected Los Angeles-based arbiter, declared that GBF wrongfully signed Donaire to a four-year promotional agreement in the face of Top Rank's contract with the WBO, WBC and Ring Magazine champion.

The ruling by Wenceslao, the nine arbiter who decided the legal skirmish between Top Rank and Golden Boy over Manny Pacquiao in 2008, allows Top Rank to promote Donaire's next bout, which is for May 26, possibly against WBA champion Jonathan Oliveros.

Top Rank had wanted arranging the bout last month.

"Top Rank hopes it can put the lawyers and legal fight behind it and return to doing what it does best—promoting the most talented boxers and the most entertaining boxing matches in the world today," said Top Rank's Bob Arum in a statement.

Arum was pleased with the decision and contended it "a huge victory."

## Hello columnists gang, bye-bye God's music man

BARE EYE

*Abcede Trinidad*

WILL THEY LET look the other way and let Willie Revillame monopolize and grow the small and poor to cater to fits up the audience and increase viewership?

Similarly, Revillame's popular interview show has become a platform for not only a group of Filipino sports columnists, who sit at hotel lobby Kenny's Grill in Manaia, Quezon City) to break ground and form a national association, may have to answer to Revillame's viewership.

Mr Rich Cela, who extended the invitation to this reporter, says she's helping put the group together.

* * *

Membership should at most be at your dreams, she reasons, meaning it shouldn't be a tight, select bunch.

But will Rich's branch agree to function as local media's dirty dozen and peddler pedal-and-worthiness test only by its elected members?

Actually it should be minding its own business, but with Revillame's never-ending vileness, this budding columnist group may have to also answer to us in our final deeds outside its accustomed territory.

In the first place, it's every columnist's duty to protect the honor-knights of his neighbors.

* * *

After today's founding affair, it goes without saying those columnists would seem clean-shirt goals.

Without sounding like a dirty, the group could only be expected to sing hosannas to great achievers like what has been properly done for Manny Pacquiao.

The truth is that, even without legislature, it will have its hands full going after overdoers in Philippine sports.

It won't, it can't function like a police force, but requires this group as its vigilante.

* * *

Above all, expect it also to bat for great champs and significant improvements in Philippine sports.

Mr. Cela says she'll be hunting for a united stand, a solid opinion-cohesion or necessary.

It's indeed an honor to be invited to be part of it.

I have gotten the go-signal from my bosses here at the Inquirer.

It's however a pity I won't be able to make it today.

* * *

I hitch a ride to Iga City to meet to catch a 2 p.m. Mass at the San Sebastian Cathedral of Cebu there because.

The requiem mass will be to honor of Fr. Clemente "Boying" Panganiban, most noted as the father of Basketball coach in Barangay.

He passed away last Sunday at age 59.

Father Boying finally got his ticket to heaven after 34 long rewards (years) with the Big C," writes Gerry Mayor, a business friend.

* * *

Well, this tireless music minister-man may not truly match wisdom from my fellow columnists.

But I know one thing: no if I break radio ahead of the group's formation.

Father Boying's achievements included: Coordinating the choir when Fr. Lorenzo Ruiz was canonized; he took musical courses in music at the Vatican where he was asked five times to play the organ by Pope John Paul II in his Mass.

He also formed the Seraphim Choir, official archdiocesan choir, second place winner in the national competition for Gregorian Mass.

"Members of the celebrated choir came from the poor, inviting fishmongers, table delivery, manicurist, etc..." reports Mayor.

It's said that, to the knowledge of music scholars and judges, Fr. Boying's golden bunch of poor boys should've been rightfully awarded the top prize.

# PH U-16 cage squad struts its wares today

By Francis T.J. Ochoa

GRASSROOTS BASKETBALL takes the spotlight today when the country's national youth under-16 squad is unveiled today at the PSCAP Flying V dome.

The squad, coached by former San Miguel beer and national team playmaker Olsen Racela, will mingle with last year's under-16 squad headlined by Ateneo's Jeoffrie Herrera and UST's Kevin Ferrer.

The match-ups are the highlight of the National Basketball Training Center (NBTC) division convergence and graduation program. The NBTC and the Samahang Basketball ng Pilipinas recently launched a grassroots program that includes public schools this year.

"We felt it was time that we gave the public schools the same attention and opportunity that we've been giving private schools," said Ron Akinradewo, NBTC-SBP program director.

Emergen of Diet Coop. has thrown its support for the public schools division of the NBTC, which will initially include 40 schools.

While the program isn't expected to immediately be a talent feeder for the national pool, PAG-CHAMP's Daniel Espiritu has high hopes that eventually, somebody from the public school ranks will make a mark in the sport.

"Hopefully, we'll get to the point where we can find talents from the public school who can join the national pool," Lopa said. "Right now, most of the really good young players are still in the private schools."

Some of these young players will strut their stuff in public for the first time as a national squad against the U-18 team.

"We're in the process of still introducing the system to the players," said Racela, whose squad is scheduled to train in the US in April. Joining Racela's squad is 6-foot-5 Isaac Go, a 16-year-old standout from Xavier.

Part of today's program will be an inspirational speech from Brian Arbandam, who NBTC training director Alex Compton described as "someone who came from the public school system."

## BRC Motorsports up April 2-3

THE 2011 BRC Motorsports season begins with the kickoff of the 2011 Bridgestone Philippine Superbikes Championship and the 2011 Premier Mighty Gasoline Philippine National Sprints and Underbone Ring Championships on April 2 and 3, at the Batangas Racing Circuit.

Defending champion Nikko Bunch of Basic-Kraft Glenn Aguilar of Ibex 2 Sports Arena Boys ready to join the Superbike Championship.

Bunch is eyeing a fifth title against 11 time champion Glenn Aguilar. Last year's seventh runner-up in the Open category.

## SPORTSWATCH

### WTJ 4-cock derby today

BAMBANG, Nueva Ecija—Breeders from Batangas, Laguna and Cavite will face their Bibi counterparts tomorrow in today's staging of ICBM 4-Cock Derby of WTJ Sports and Amusement Center here in Cabu City.

The 49-member United Cavite Breeders Association is now headed by Benny Aguinaldo. Today's competition will feature more than 80 fights.

### NatGeo run listing ends April 3

DEADLINE for registration for the National Geographic Channel's Earth Day Run (EDR) is on April 3, organizers said over the weekend. This will allow participants to register at the World Trade Center in Makati City until Sunday.

Interested participants can register at the NatGeo EDR booth at the left-wing ground floor of Greenbelt 3 in Makati City until Sunday.

Online registration is already closed.

Entry fees are pegged at P600, P700 and P900 for the 3K, 10K and 21K races, respectively, and P1,150 for the new 21K event, inclusive of a limited-edition technical shirt.

# Extended leave for Barako Bull

PHOENIX PETROLEUM fell short by only a vote of becoming a member of the most prestigious basketball organization in the country today.

The ballsbirds gave their nod in the sale of Barako Bull to Phoenix, but this was not enough to meet the required two-thirds vote mandated in the PBA constitution and by-laws. A minimum of seven votes were needed to approve the sale of the Barako Bull franchise.

**IN HUDDLE**

Beth Cuñada

Abalos's Joseph Trillo, Ramir or Elmer's Manuero Mendoza, Patrick Gregorio of Talk 'N Text, Ramon Segismundo of Barangay Ginebra, Ernesto Dawaynon of Powerade, who represented Jun Bayles, and, of course, Manny Mendoza of Barako Bull stood in favor of the sale.

* * *

As expected, Phoenix owner Dennis Uy was very disappointed by the result of the voting, although commissioner Chito Salud said the door has not been completely shut on the bid company.

"They can apply again in the future if they want to, but will have to go through the same vetting procedure," Chito said.

"It has been Dennis' dream to join the PBA," said a source from the Fiba. "For years he has been supporting the league by being a title sponsor and by promoting the sport. Now it's a matter of how he continues to support the league."

* * *

The Barako Bull camp is probably just as disappointed, if not more so.

They intend to use their extended leave of absence looking around for a new and "serious buyer."

"There are a number of prospects, but I doubt if they're really serious like Phoenix Petroleum," said a source close to Barako Bull.

"Who knows, if conditions improve, we may own teachers sooner than expected."

* * *

Rivermen super Kiefer Ravena may not even thinking of basketball when he flies featured him in the centerfold of the basketball Weekly Magazine 10 years ago.

Kiefer was celebrating his second birthday then, and to the delight of his parents Bong and Manny Ravena, senior photographer Joey Lo came up with a full spread portrait of the occasion.

When I saw Kiefer last Sunday at the Shakey's V-League Summer Camp at the Ateneo (Mac Espiritu Gan, I brought her one also (ed: volleyball).

But Bong and Manny quickly corrected the impression. Their little girl probably, they said, is excited to be a celebrity in the basketball scene (coming from the country's top volleyball pro).

"Kiefer just joined us for a bite of Shakey's pizza. He just got off from the Eagles' regular workout," said Manny, who used to be a varsity spiker and is now television executive for the Shakey's V-League.

Kiefer will be with the Blue Eagles starting this UAAP season. Guess who's so excited at Bong and Manny, if not more so.

"He's very talented. He's going to provide a big lift to the team. He was our best player in grade school and high school," said Ateneo head coach Bonnie Black of his 5-foot-11 guard.

* * *

Hillarity League president Bill de Leon treated us the result of the recently concluded First Pit League tournament held at SM Manila: Seniors champion a Lycean, winning 2-1, against National University, while juniors champ is Xavier University, which defeated St. Mary's, 2-1, in best-of-three matches. Bernard Bique of Lyceum was chosen Seniors MVP and Ateneo's Shantino Jumilara MVP.

JUVIC PAGUNSAN is here for another title crack.

# Amateur Carlos ties Pagunsan

By Cedrick P. Tupas

SAN RAFAEL, BULACAN—Amateur Javin Carlos matched the eminent Juvic Pagunsan stroke for stroke at the two shot 6-under par this yesterday to share the lead at the start of the ICTSI Royal Northwoods championship here.

Handling the bowling pairs well while playing together in an all-amateurs flight, Carlos and Pagunsan took a one-stroke lead over Jay Bayron and Mark Fernando to this inchoff tie of the ICTSI-Philippine Golf Tour.

The 18-year-old Carlos, the individual champion of the Montecillo Junior golf championship early this month, posted rounds of 69 and 70 in the Jungmen, the Asian Tour mainstay and top favorite here, keypace with rivals of 33-33.

Defending champion Marvin Dumandan, Kevin Sivan, Elmer Salvador and Anthony Fernando, who played with Pagunsan and Carlos, stood two shots off the lead with 68s.

Carlos birdied five of the first nine holes against a bogey on the par-4 eighth hole when he missed the green.

Fernando was also to scrambling form, going five under after 11 holes, highlighted by his eagle-only 4th after sinking his second shot from 76 yards.

Pagunsan needed just 24 putts for the day, including two clutch ones to save par on 10 from sixfeet and 12 from 12 feet.

The ace shotmaker from Bacolod gunned down his birdies on 3, 5, 9, 11, 14 and 16 all inside seven feet.

"I feel good about my game now," said Pagunsan, who last played in the 4th The Country Club Invitational last January where he finished third.

Bayron fired six birdies against a lone bogey in his rounds of 33-34.

"I'm still looking for consistency in my game," said Bayron.

The scoring games (4 – Pagunsan (33-33), Carlos (34-33), Bayron (33-34), Fernando (33-34), Sivan (34-34), Salvador (33-35), Dumandan (33-35), Lopez (34-34), Salvador (33-35), Dumandan (33-35), Lopez (34-34), Salvador (33-35), Dumandan (33-35), Lopez

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**DID YOU KNOW**

TODAY, March 31, is the 46th death anniversary of Nicanor Abad Fernandez, "Botong" Francisco. He was one of the country's first generation modernist painters, together with Victorio Edades and Carlos V. Francisco. The mural for the Bulwagang Katipunan at Manila City Hall, "Filipino Struggle through History," which chronicles the history of Manila, was Fernandez's first major masterpiece. He was named National Artist for Painting in 1973. —**Zoilett Gonzales, Inquirer Research**

# MRT, LRT safety checks to be reviewed

By Paolo G. Montecillo

THE SERIES of mishaps and technical malfunctions that have plagued the Metro Rail Transit (MRT) and Linest 1 and 2 of the Light Rail Transit (LRT) since the start of the year have prompted the Department of Transportation and Communications to order the implementation of stricter maintenance procedures to ensure the safety of passengers.

Right now, all LRT and MRT trains are inspected four times a day—before the start of operations, after the morning peak hours, before the afternoon peak hours and before the ending of operations.

"But [Transportation] Secretary [Jose de Jesus] wants these procedures to be viewed and if there are [any] loopholes [or] gaps," LRT Authority (LRTA) spokesperson Hernando Cabrera said yesterday.

Cabrera said Dr. Jesus had asked the LRTA to see if any of the procedures needed to be improved. "The secretary also wants us to check all train parts that were recently involved in accidents," he added.

In January an LRT train's brake system malfunctioned, forcing the driver to stop the train in the middle of the tracks. Six passengers were slightly injured in a stampede caused by people who panicked and rushed out of one of the coaches.

Then some month, a faulty coller caused an overhead pantograph to fall on the MRT Ayala Station to stop abruptly, causing some of them to fall

MRT, LRT, A 12

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# No carjacker in CCTV video, says police official

By Mike Navallo

PARAÑAQUE City police chief Senior Supt. Marico Pascual yesterday said he was still waiting for Commission on Audit (COA) Chair Reynaldo Villar to personally report the carjacking of his government-issued vehicle—a white Toyota Fortuner with license plate ZRV 924.

"We cannot instruct someone else to report the crime on his behalf. He has to do it himself," Pascual told the reporters in a phone interview. "When a crime happens to someone, the victim usually comes to the station to report the incident regardless of their stature."

On Tuesday, Villar said that an armed man took the open utility vehicle from him as he was about to drive himself home.

The carjacking took place at around 10:45 a.m. in front of a café at BF Homes Subdivision in Paranaque City where he lives, the COA chief added.

Pascual said he was wondering why Villar had to be assured by customers only to the media instead of going to the police so that they could begin their investigation.

He added that a check of the footage taken by the café's closed-circuit TV camera showed Villar getting into the SUV. "Even from the video, we cannot see any other person enter the vehicle," Pascual said.

In a phone interview with the Inquirer the other day, Villar said that after he got into his SUV, an armed man opened the door on the passenger side and gave a "brusk" "Dali!" he say that I "Why is he reporting the incident to you instead of on policemen?" Pascual said.

The firearm armed suspect did not fire any gunshot but only told him to get out of the vehicle, Villar said.

Villar said he used his cellphone to call his driver and security escort to report the incident.

"I don't know why he does not want to report the incident," he said. "My investigators went to his house but his house help said there's no one. Why won't he face us?" he said.

## A monument to the drug mules

ON TARGET
RANDY DAVID

A RADIO-TV network went overboard in covering the carnation yesterday of two media liaison Cesar Cesar, fully dedicated Villanueva and Elizabeth Batista.

The show have become celebrities and heroes.

We should not be surprised if the broadcast network sets up a monument to them as is composed to Jessica Soho.

It will not be surprising at that if a movie will be made about the lives of Cesar, Villanueva and Elizabeth Batista by the network's movie outfit.

The title of the movie might probably be "Hilary Mga Inosente (They Were Innocent)" or "Nilokohan Kami (We Were Deceived)", in reference to the claim of the three that they didn't know what was in their luggage when they entered China.

Patriotic movie stars might play the roles of Cesar, Villanueva and Batista.

Who knows, the movie might become a blockbuster.

It might even reap awards.

* * *

We are sending the wrong message to our children to glorifying Cesar, Villanueva and Batista.

Our youths might think that becoming a drug mule is rewarding, because it would bring them sudden fame if they get caught.

And if they don't get caught, then they earn big money and lead exciting lives.

* * *

If Cesar, Villanueva and Batista had not been caught, imagine how many lives in China would have been destroyed because of them.

Cesar was caught with 3.84 kg of heroin, Villanueva 4.03 kg, and Batista 6.8 kilos.

Now, put yourself in the shoes of the Chinese people and then think about the 10 years who would become drug addicts if some Chinese brought in the same amounts of drugs into the country.

Would you still pity Cesar, Villanueva and Batista?

* * *

A radio station asked yesterday what the country does to Chinese nationals who get convicted of drug trafficking.

Some employees at the Court of Appeals who happened to be listening in on the program answered the question: The Chinese would be acquitted by the appellate court.

In fact, many Chinese serving time at the National Penitentiary have been released after their were acquitted by the Court of Appeals.

So, if you get convicted by the lower court for drug pushing or trafficking in this country, don't despair because the appellate court will set you free for the right price.

NEWPORT CINEMAS
1 JUSTIN BIEBER: NEVER SAY NEVER 3:25, 6:45, 7:05, 9:45
2 BATTLE LOS ANGELES 1:30, 4:15, 6:40, 10:00
3 SUCKER PUNCH in 2D 2:05, 4:55, 7:35, 10:15
4 CATCH ME I'M IN LOVE 1:45, 4:35, 7:15, 10:15

## MRT, LRT safety checks to be reviewed

From page A1

Dark haloes and leering sins expired.

In February, two trains of the LRT Line 1 were derailed in a collision after one of their drivers was found to be speeding while using his cell phone. Strenuously, both trains were empty.

On March 23, one of the coaches was uncoupled from an MRT train after the coupling mechanism failed. None of the 650 passengers was hurt.

Earlier this week, a train of the LRT Line 1 stopped in between stations as an electromechanical component monitoring its brakes malfunctioned. Passengers panicked as the train emitted smoke, with several breaking glass windows and doors in their haste to get out. Four people were injured as a result.

Yesterday, another train from the same line was forced to make an emergency stop after its computer systems misbehaved right in the middle of the busiest commercial district. Trains are not allowed to run while doors are opened.

Critics said the mishaps and malfunctions had highlighted the deteriorating condition of the train systems and corporations' lax safety of passengers.

LRT Line 1, which runs from Baclaran to Fanoy to Roosevelt in Quezon City, is the country's oldest urban rail transit system.

The MRT runs on tube-and is the most congested train line in the metropolis, carrying close to half a million passengers a day—over its designed capacity of 350,000.

So far, LRT Line 2, which is the newest of the three, has been spared from accidents.

### 2 LRT stations to reopen

Meanwhile, the Roosevelt and Baclaran stations of the LRT Line 1 will open on April 11 after being closed due to safety reasons.

LRTA Administrator Rafael S. Rodriguez said the two stations were ready to service the public after almost two months of thorough evaluation and the enhancement of operational procedures and safety requirements.

"The affected people have for the refresher and retraining of all train operators in Line 1 and a modernization on the safety driving policy to keep them from figuring in rail-related accidents," Rodriguez added.

The stations were closed after two trains collided at Baclaran rail station.

## METROBRIEFS

### Teenager charged with murder

A TEENAGER gang member was charged with the murder of another teenager from a rival gang in the Manila Regional Trial Court yesterday. Valentino "Tatang" Santos, 19, was charged with shooting and killing Henry Carpio, also 19, during a free-for-all in Sampaloc, Manila, on March 26. The same was filed by Assistant City Prosecutor Ramon Z. Encinas. The victim was in a computer shop on P. Noriega Street with four friends when around 10 young men riding on same motorcycles arrived in the area and started firing warning gunshots, said one investigator.

SPO3 Danilo V. Velasco of the Manila Police District's homicide section in his report said that a fight broke out with the victim's group throwing rocks at the instigators. The victim then tried to chase some members of the other gang during which Santos and a 17-year-old boy shot him. Seven more members of the gang remain at large.

Jigmee T. Exact

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A SINGAPOREAN reader of a newspaper looks at the controversial photograph of a maid carrying a soldier's bag for him. AFP

# Obama hopes Gadhafi will finally step down

WASHINGTON—United States President Barack Obama said Tuesday he was confident that Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi would "ultimately" step down and wanted his hard-won rebel war supplying arms to rebels seeking to oust him.

Obama said the "noose is tightening" around the Libyan strongman, but noted it did not appear yet that Gadhafi was seeking to negotiate an exit from Libya, despite a fierce bombardment of his forces by an international coalition.

The president gave interviews to three network television news shows as part of a firm defense of his Libya strategy, which included of no soldiers to American on Monday and coming appearances by his national security team to Congress.

Obama's comments reflected an apparent attempt by US and allied forces to raise intolerable pressure on Gadhafi and his forces to drive him from power.

"Our expectation is that as we continue to apply steady pressure, not only militarily but also through these other means, that Gadhafi will ultimately step down," Obama said in his interview with NBC.

Obama continued in his upbeat assessment on Monday however, that though he would use force to protect civilians, an effort to oust Gadhafi by force would replicate the carnage and financial cost of the Iraq war.

His comments on Tuesday followed a major international conference on next steps in Libya in London where Italian Foreign Minister Franco Frattini told AFP that participants had "unanimously" agreed Gadhafi should leave Libya.

But Frattini said, as yet, no nation had made a formal proposition to offer Gadhafi exile.

Obama told ABC News that there around Gadhafi were beginning to rethink their positions as his regime came under intense outside pressure.

"I think what we're seeing is that the circle around Gadhafi understands that the noose is tightening, that their days are probably numbered, and they are going to have to think through what their next steps are," Obama said.

Obama also confided that he was thinking through the idea of arming opposition rebels in Libya, though had yet to make a final decision.

"We're looking at all our options at this point," he said. "We are examining all options to support the opposition," he told ABC.

"I'm not ruling it out. But I'm also not ruling it in," he added in an NBC, but cautioned that though Washington's knowledge of the identity, goals and makeup of the rebels was improving, it was not yet comprehensive.

Those members of the Libyan opposition who had met top US officials, including Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, had been fully "vetted," he said. But some opposition individuals may be unfriendly to the United States, he added.

"That's why I think it's important for us not to jump in with both feet, that is carefully examine what are the goals of the opposition," Obama told CBS. AFP

## Maid carrying soldier's bag sparks outrage in Singapore

SINGAPORE—A photograph of a maid carrying a soldier's rucksack as she walked behind him has sparked outrage in Singapore and concern that recruits to its armed forces are overpampered.

The picture, published in the Singaporean media and on the Internet this week, showed the male soldier in military fatigues and combat boots strolling on a footpath.

His female maid followed a step behind with the military issued rucksack slung over her left shoulder.

Reactions to the photograph, which was first posted on Facebook, ranged from amusement to anger and disbelief that Singapore's current generation of soldiers were "softies."

The blend-every successful SAF (Singapore Armed Forces) soldier, there is a maid," Chinese-strong writer, tongue in cheek, the Twitter.

"SAF should find the maid! last. Enlist her in the Army, she's strong!" tweeted Red Mist14.

"If he can't carry his own field pack, how to depend on this kind of soldier to defend Singapore," Timesreport20 tweeted on the issue that became of news portal Stomp.

Singapore maintains a conscript-based military. Every able-bodied male citizen and permanent resident 18 years old and above must undergo two years of military training.

News reports have published criticism that current training drills are not as tough compared with what older generations had to undergo because of complaints from parents.

Insiders, however, said the rucksack photograph was not a fair representation of today's armed forces.

"This was one incident. I think the only conclusion we can practically make is that that soldier does indeed need some assistance as soft and pampered," said Bernard Lee, an expert on military affairs at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies.

But he said it was unfair to generalise the present soldiers, as current servicemen were actually fitter than their predecessors.

"I think the statistics probably would tell us that by and large, the average national servicemen is physically fitter today than their counterparts say 15, 20 years ago," Lee told AFP on Wednesday.

The defense ministry said it was investigating the matter, as online design mags went to town with parodies of the photograph.

One mock-up featured the image of the hardened maid atop a poster of a soldier lying a rock-it inside a military vehicle.

Another had the maid with the backpack strolling across a battlefield behind a tank as a soldier lying his gun into the distance, with the caption in unpolished text, "Help Maid, Our Army."

Local daily the New Paper also surveyed 20 national servicemen and found that 22 of them had their maids wash and iron their army uniforms, while 17 had their domestic helpers clean their rooms for them.

Close to 300,000 maids—largely from Indonesia and the Philippines—were estimated to be working in different Singapore homes last year. AFP

## Syria offers concessions to protesters

DAMASCUS—Facing an extraordinary wave of popular dissent, Syrian President Bashar Assad lifted his Cabinet on Tuesday and promised to end widely despised emergency laws—concessions unlikely to appease protesters demanding sweeping reforms in one of the most hard-line nations in the Middle East.

The concessions, while largely symbolic, are a measure of the compromise in the Assad family's 40 years of iron-fisted rule. Security forces monitor and control nearly every aspect of society in Syria, and the feared secret police crush even the smallest rumblings of opposition. Dissension laws have all but eradicated civil liberties and political freedoms.

But with the protests that erupted in Syria on March 18, thousands of Syrians appear to have broken through a barrier of fear in their tightly controlled nation of 23 million.

"Syria stands at a crossroads," said Abdulrahman Shaaban, a leading human rights activist.

"Either the president takes immediate, drastic reform measures, or the country descends into one of several ugly scenarios. If he is willing to lead Syria into a real democratic transformation, he will be true halfway by the Syrian people," Shaaban said.

The coming days will be key in determining whether Assad's concessions will quiet the protest movement, which began after security forces arrested several teenagers who scrawled anti-government graffiti on a wall in the impoverished city of Deraa in the south.

The protests spread to other provinces and the government launched a swift crackdown, killing more than 60 people since March 18, according to HumanRights Watch. AP

## WORLDBRIEFS

### Gunmen kill 56 in Iraq hostage siege

BAGHDAD—Wearing military uniforms over explosive belts, gunmen held a local Iraqi government worker hostage Tuesday in a siege that ended with the deaths of at least 56 people, including three women and who were executed with gunshots to the head. The five-hour standoff in Tikrit, former dictator Saddam Hussein's home town, ended only when the attackers blew themselves up in one of the bloodiest days in Iraqi this year. First they set fire to the bodies of the three dead Salahuddin province councilmen in a brutal, defiant show of how much power still remains Iraq overthrow—even if it has so far not yet cannot nothing across the Arab world. Speaking in a muted voice, Salahuddin Gov. Ahmed Abdullah called the attack "a tragic incident can lead out to ruthless terrorists," Iraqi officials were quick to blame al-Qaeda in Iraq for the slaughter. AP

### Tepco president hospitalized in Tokyo

TOKYO—The president of the utility that owns Japan's tsunami-damaged nuclear complex was hospitalized with hypertension as setbacks mounted at the plant, where experts Wednesday logged the highest radiation yet in nearby seawater. Masataka Shimizu, president of Tokyo Electric Power Co. (Tepco), has not been seen for nearly two weeks or his appearing at a Tokyo news conference two days after the March 11 earthquake and tsunami that battered the Fukushima Daiichi plant's cooling system and set off radiation leaks. Shimizu, 66, was taken Tuesday to a Tokyo hospital after suffering dizziness and high blood pressure. Tepco spokesperson Noriaki Tsunoda said. There had been much speculation about Shimizu's health since he disappeared from public view, with company vice president Sakae Muto appearing instead at news briefings. AP

### Bomber kills 13 at Pakistan checkpoint

PESHAWAR—A suicide bomber riding a motorcycle attacked a police checkpoint in Swabi town in northwestern Pakistan on Wednesday, striking amid a crowd gathered along the road to greet a prominent hard-line Islamist politician and killing 13 people, police said. It was unclear if the bomber specifically targeted the supporter of politician Maulana Fazlur Rehman or if they just happened to be there when he hit the checkpoint. Rehman has been an outspoken supporter of the Afghan Taliban. The bomber detonated his explosives just outside the checkpoint when a policeman told him to halt, said Saeed Khan, a police official at the main communications center in Peshawar city. The blast killed the policeman and 12 other civilians nearby, said Khan. Another 12 people were wounded. AP

### Ivory Coast rebels take 2 more towns

ABIDJAN—A defense spokesperson for Ivory Coast's internationally recognized leader says that rebels loyal to Alassane Ouattara have taken over two more towns. Capt. Leon Alla said Wednesday the forces are now in control of the central town of Bouafle. He said later Tuesday the rebels also took over Sinfra, another central town. The announcement comes a day after forces supporting Ouattara claimed to have secured the major cities of Daoukoue and Gagnoa and the town of Bouandoukou. Gotoa has its own airport and is on the artery leading to the capital and the key port of San Pedro. AP

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# The WORLD

Cebu Lawrence B. Garces

# Japan orders nuke plant safety upgrade

TOKYO—Japan ordered an immediate safety upgrade at its 55 nuclear power plants on Wednesday in its first acknowledgement that standards were inadequate when an earthquake and tsunami wrecked one of the facilities nearly three weeks ago.

Adding to the evidence of unpreparedness, 240 kilometers north of Tokyo, readings showed radioactive iodine in the sea off the plant at record levels. The state nuclear safety agency said the amounts were 1,300 times the legal limit.

A Reuters investigation showed Japan and plant operator Tokyo Electric Power (Tepco) repeatedly played down dangers as an nuclear industry insider, ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry Hisaki Kitada told a news conference.

"These are the minimum steps we can think of right now that should be done immediately," said Kitada. "We shouldn't wait until a so-called overhaul or a comprehensive revision—something might need to be improved. We should do whatever we can if old rules there is something (which safety authorities agree to) visible and necessary," he said.

Before the disaster, Japan's nuclear watchdog had provided about 30 percent of the nation's electric power. The percentage had been expected to rise to 50 percent by 2030, among the highest in the world.

The government and Tepco concocted plans only in mid to late April to the world's worst nuclear disaster since Chernobyl in 1986. "We are not in a situation where we can say we still have this under control by a certain period," Chief Cabinet Secretary Yukio Edano told a news briefing.

The discovery of highly toxic plutonium at two sites could also be the work had already raised alarm over the disaster, which has overshadowed the humanitarian calamity triggered by the earthquake and tsunami, which left 27,500 people dead or missing. Reuters

Jollibee Graduation BUCKET

Jollibee Graduation Bucket Promo makes celebrations "extra" delicious

Special occasions such as Graduation Day become even more special when families head over their favorite meals. And no one knows this better than Jollibee, giving families an "extra" delicious reason to celebrate during this graduation season. With its Jollibee Graduation Bucket Promo, families are treated to an extra piece of Chickenjoy or Chicken Barbecue for FREE with every purchase of a 6-pc bucket.

From March 6 to April 24, 2011, families can delight in more of the scrumptious and juicy-licious goodness of Jollibee Chickenjoy and the delicious-inside-and-out taste of Jollibee Chicken Barbecue through the Jollibee Graduation Bucket Promo. They get a FREE additional piece of chicken with every 6-piece Chickenjoy Bucket, 6-piece Chicken Barbecue Bucket, or the 6-piece Combo Bucket—all for the affordable price of P328.

To complete the delicious celebration, the bucket purchase can be upgraded to any of these bucket meal options. Add only P60 and enjoy your bucket with 3 cups of rice and 3 regular-sized soft drinks. Or for an additional P150, your chicken bucket will come with 3 Jollibee Chocolate Sundaes, 3 cups of rice and 3 regular-sized soft drinks.

"The offer this on a treat to all the Pinoy families who have worked hard towards this important family occasion and as our way of saying "Thank you!" to always making Jollibee a part of their momentous celebrations. We will stay committed in creating and inspiring more family bonding moments," says Albert Cambronio, Jollibee VP for Marketing.

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# Burma's junta 'dissolved'

NAYPYIDAW—Burma's (Myanmar) junta was officially dissolved Wednesday after a swearing-in ceremony for the new government, the latest phase of a transition to democracy that has been widely criticized as sham.

State television and radio reported that the new government headed by President Thein Sein was sworn in by parliament in the remote capital of Naypyidaw. Thein Sein was the junta's prime minister and a top member of the previous military government.

The short-lived inauguration was announced only after it took place, in keeping with the junta's secretive style of government. Burma, which has been ruled by the military since 1962, held its first elections in 20 years in November, though there has been little indication some of real democratic changes.

The news reports said the new government's arrival marked the end of the junta's longtime ruling party, the State Peace and Development Council, or SPDC, which has been in power since 1988.

"The SPDC is officially dissolved," state media reported, saying that the dissolution was ordered by junta chief Senior Gen. Than Shwe, who testified absolute power since 1992.

State media did not mention what becomes of Than Shwe. The dissolution of his party would render him effectively retired but Than Shwe is expected to remain a dominant force.

The 76-year-old junta go is expected to be his official posts—as SPDC chairman and armed forces commander.

Gen. Min Aung Hlaing, a senior defense official, was named the new commander of Burma's armed forces, and lieutenant Phone Myint Aung, who attended the inauguration.

The new government of 30 members Cabinet is dominated by former military officers who retired in order to run in last November's elections. About a dozen of the ministers were members of the junta's Cabinet. Only four of the appointees are entirely civilian.

Unlike any last year's elections were outlawed by the junta to perpetuate military rule. With one quarter of the seats in parliament filled by military appointees and a large majority of the remaining seats won by a military-backed party, the army remains power.

The party of Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, which won the last elections in 1990 but was blocked from taking power by the military, boycotted November's vote, calling it unfair. Much of the international community also dismissed the elections as rigged in favor of the junta.

Suu Kyi who still heads the opposition group, the National League for Democracy, said she hoped relations with the new government would be better.

"We always want good relations with the government. I hope that the relationship improves," Suu Kyi said over the weekend. "We will work for good relations." AP

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Editor Raul O. Marcelo • Assistant Editor Carmie S. Mariano

# BUSINESS

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# Supply disruptions hit Japan firms in PH

## INDICATORS

**PESO-DOLLAR RATE**
March 30, 2011
43.440

**STOCK MARKET**
March 30, 2011
▲116.51

### Telecom stocks lift market

TELEGROUP STOCKS pushed up the index stock index yesterday by nearly 3 percent as the custom of the duopoly in the highly competitive industry is central Dealing PLDT and Globe Telecom's dividends higher pricing for their services.

The main share Philippine Stock Exchange index surged 116.51 points or 2.98 percent to finish at 4,023.74. It was the best single-day gain posted by the local stocks market in four months.

The day's upswing was led by index heavyweight PLDT, whose shares surged 51.72 percent to P2,260 as the telco cemented its position as the biggest player in the industry by grabbing up third player Digitel, which over the years has prompted rivals to publish its undivided SMS and voice call offerings.

PLDT has a 13 percent weight on the main index while rival Globe Telecom accounts for 1.73 percent.

Despite facing a much bigger competitor is obviously that is heavily dependent base of PLDT, shares of Globe Telecom gained 125 (8 percent to P967 on prospects of better overall pricing for the remaining leading players in the industry. Shares of Globe parent Ayala Corp. were like wise up 2.67 percent to P595.40.

Digitel was down 14.76 percent to P1.30 on the telco cemented its position as the biggest player in the industry by grabbing up third player Digitel, which over the years has prompted rivals to publish its undivided SMS and voice call offerings.

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Digitel was down 14.76 percent to P1.30 on the Globe parent (G Summit, however, was up 3.45 percent to P55.35 as it was widely perceived to have inducted a good deal with PLDT. *Doris C. Dumlao*

## Gov't monitors electronics, automotive sectors

By Abigail L. Ho

WITH JAPAN still recovering from a massive earthquake and trying to prevent a nuclear meltdown, Japanese companies operating in the Philippines are starting to feel the ill effects of the crisis, mainly in terms of delayed export and supply deliveries.

A recent survey conducted by the Japan External Trade Organization's Manila office showed that 66.6 percent of the 303 respondents recognized the impact of the crisis on their operations. The biggest current impact, the survey showed, had to do with delays in the deliveries of both exported and imported products and components.

Experts fear the Philippines is Japan were not getting to their destination on time due to delays at the Narita International Airport. Having been damaged by the quake, Narita airport's cargo center had been unable to receive cargo deliveries, thus resulting in delivery delays.

Companies surveyed also said they were having cumulative difficulty in getting goods and materials from Japan.

Even non-manufacturing companies, which did not have deliveries to worry about, also complained of the crisis' adverse impact on their businesses. Firms in the hotel, tourism and transportation industries, in particular, said they were experiencing travel reservations and trip cancellations.

Only 11.1 percent of the surveyed firms said the crisis had no impact at all on their operations. However, 14.1 percent of those polled said they have yet to determine the effect of the crisis on their future prospects.

"The fact that a lot of companies felt uncertain about their future prospects indicates the severity of the disaster," the Jetro study stated.

"For the future impact, most uncertainties were related to the difficulty in procurement of goods and materials. An overwhelming number of manufacturing companies commented that due to the delay in production in Japan,

SUPPLY B2

## Groups slam 'lack of green' in dev't plan

By Rina T. Chiluwalan

DESPITE DELUSIONS to the so-called Cancun to Green the ASTPDP- Dibolisan Fenix Philippine Development Plan) have criticized the recently approved plan for 2011 to 2016, saying that members' inputs were "unprecedentedly omitted."

Led by the private think tank Isa Liga Policy Institute (La Liga), the Cancun to Green the ASTPDP apparently presented inputs to the following areas: (1) fossil self-sufficiency based on sustainable, ecological and organic agricultural use; (2) disaster risk reduction and management; (3) improved ecosystem, soil and water management, and (4) sustainable, off-grid, decentralized, community-based, efficient and non-renewable energy systems.

"These inputs were noticeably absent in the ASTPDP that was approved by the National Economic and Development Authority Board," La Liga executive director Benjamin Caoili said in a statement.

"We were particularly disturbed that the proposed for a 'Green Audit' that will allow for a continuing review and adjustment of the country's development plan in terms of its consistency with environment sustainability was also omitted," Benjamin said.

The provision for a "Green Audit" originally formed part of the draft chapter on environment and natural resources. It was, however, unilaterally excluded in the final draft of the ASTPDP, Benjamin said.

Benjamin said that disaster risk reduction, mitigation and recovery projects were also deleted from the Investment Priorities Plan for 2011 based on flood mountain retreats.

"We have implored President Aquino's administration time and again not to relent in pursuing conservation, protection and rehabilitation of our environment and natural resources as it is the best socioeconomic safety net for our highly ecologically dependent and highly vulnerable communities," he said.

According to Benjamin, in its attention pursuit of growth, the previous administration failed to con-

GROUPS B2

BANK OF THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS

**On its 160th year, the Bank of the Philippine Islands is pleased to announce the completion of the acquisition of the trust and investment management business and other related assets of ING Bank N.V. Manila Branch. With this acquisition, the ING Unit Investment Trust Funds will be known as Odyssey Funds.**

The acquired business and its employees will be absorbed as a division of BPI Asset Management creating a much stronger organization ready to serve customers' needs in a dynamic investment environment.

BPI Asset Management, a multi-awarded investment manager, is the second largest in the country with total assets under management (AUM) of PHP 485 billion as of December 31, 2010. It has the largest investment funds in the Philippines and is widely recognized as a key player in the institutional fund management and wealth management businesses.

ING Investment Management Philippines is part of the ING Group and is ING Bank Manila's main asset management business unit. Its trust and investment management business in the Philippines ranks sixth with PHP 78 billion in AUM as of December 31, 2010 and is the largest Philippine based foreign fund manager.

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BPI Asset Management ING

BPI Let's make it easy.

# Property firm eyes stock listing to fund expansion

## ACM sees sales breaching ₱1-B mark this year

By Doris C. Dumlao

BOUTIQUE RESIDENTIAL property developer ACM Landholdings Inc. is planning to debut on the Philippine Stock Exchange within this year or in 2012 to raise as much as ₱1 billion to fresh capital to meet brisk demand for low- to medium-cost housing.

ACM, a niche property developer founded 10 years ago by two Filipino trading and finance executives based in Hong Kong, has so far delivered close to 10,000 homes in 16 projects within Cavite and Batangas. Given the strong demand for housing units worth between ₱500,000 and ₱1.6 million, top officials announced yesterday plans to expand to new areas and even venture into mid-rise residential buildings.

Company founder Antonette de Guzman (ACM president) and Carolina Arellano (managing director) told reporters yesterday that ACM—which had chosen to conduct business in a low-profile manner in previous years—would now make its brand better known to a broader market given plans to expand its geographic reach as well as to tap the capital market.

Guzman said the company had grown 35 percent each year from 2008 to 2009 and would likely breach the ₱1-billion mark in revenues this year compared with ₱900 million in 2010.

Its profit last year stood at ₱134 million, which is expected to rise to ₱150 million in this year. For every ₱1 sale made, the company has a return of about 18 to 20 centavos.

Going public is in the pipeline for ACM, depending on market opportunities, said Dr. Guzman.

Guzman added that the company has already considered a stock market debut years in the past—in 1997 and in 2008—but this was preempted by the Asian crisis and the US subprime good financial crisis.

Guzman said ACM would like to raise fresh funds for expansion in sufficient amounts and terms to attract investors. But the company would likewise want to finally push through with its stock market listing.

The company plans to expand to new areas like Davao and Iloilo, branch into resthouse projects and consider opportunities for growth through mergers and acquisitions, Orbit is said.

The elder company's board-among others-said ACM might consider its initial public offering size of at least ₱500 million to as much as ₱1 billion and bring 30-40 percent of the company to public hands. ACM officials have also met recently with the PSE to lay the groundwork for the stock debut.

Favorable demographics in the Philippines and the huge supply backlog in the market segment it serves, alongside low interest rates and greater appetite among banks to lend for housing purchases are seen supporting the company's growth. Government's market include related ventures.

In 2007, ACM formed a strategic marketing alliance with a leading corn management firm, Philippine Transmission Centers. This enabled the company to exclusively tap nearly 30,000 workers and serve its affiliated organizations of having their own homes, Ms Guzman said.

But ACM has evolved over the years from a company focused on established housing as it expanded its market base and started offering middle-income housing units.

## How many credit cards should a person have?

**MONEY MATTERS**

*Efren H. Cruz*

QUESTION: WHAT is the ideal number of credit cards that an individual should maintain?

In this day and age, credit cards are probably as ubiquitous as cell phones. And just like cell phones, people tend to have more than one credit card. The question is how many credit cards is enough. The answer is as many as you need as long as within the limit you've told of your credit card limits and whatever "permanent" short-term debt (not renewed from credit cards) you can pay in regard to or smaller than you short-term assets.

Now before you grab a fancy paper and start scribbling, let's go back to "basics" matters. The financial health of an individual is measured in almost the way as that of a company. And one of the tools used in checking financial health is the current ratio. Simply put, the current ratio measures the capacity of your short-term assets to pay off your short-term debts, assuming there will be no other sources of cash to do so (e.g. like your salary).

There is now a "new normal" in the world, that of volatility. Governments in economies recalibrate before the world since the 1990s. And such volatility has many times led to significant cost-cutting and job-loss. Current ratio helps in determining whether you will have enough short-term assets to liquidate those short-term debts if some of whom job or significant to your business.

Credit cards are good for providing standby money in case of emergencies. However, such standby money is borrowed money. Credit cards give easy access to short-term loans with easy terms can lead to misuse of credit limits especially in situations of utter need. And if you have more than one credit card, such unused yet credit limits can make your short-term debt to balloon to amounts much larger than your short-term assets, thus making you illiquid.

Credit card balances are not the only component of short-term debts. There are also some borrowings that are contractually embedded, which can be called, payment and short-term debts. There are debts that we pay out then immediately as needed because funds are simply not enough to sustain current living needs. Examples would be borrowings from parents, lending institutions, loan sharks, *pahuwagers*, etc. Therefore, permanent short-term debt is not to be included in the computation of the current ratio.

So let's say we have short-term assets worth ₱100,000. We also have permanent short-term debt amounting to ₱20,000. This means that the worst-case scenario where you max out your credit limit, you can only add a maximum of ₱80,000 to your debt before your current ratio is be at least 1 times. You can thus get only as many credit cards that will give you a total credit limit of ₱80,000.

Of course, if you have a great offered a credit card, think about how much potential short-term debt you can still incur to find the total will not go over the size of your short-term assets. That said, still if you should get that additional card or not.

*Efren H. Cruz is a registered financial planner with the RFP ETA. He is author of the bestselling books, "Break Out: The Complete Prime Guide to Retirement" & Estate Planning" and "Break Out: The Complete Prime Guide to Retirement & Estate Planning." He is also the general CEO of Investar Advisors Philippines Inc.) Questions about the article may be emailed to efren@investarmail.com.ph.*

## Net foreign deposits hit $1.9B in 2010

By Michelle V. Bunoz

BANKS IN the country enjoyed a net deposit from foreigners in 2010, recovering from the net withdrawal experienced the previous year, as they benefited from the overall overall optimism about emerging Asian economies.

Central bank officials said deposit placements by foreigners added to the growing resources of the country's banking system and these funds allowed banks to lend more to individuals and enterprises.

In turn, officials said the increase in bank loans helped boost consumption and investments, thereby fueling the economy's recovery last year from its slowdown in 2009.

The BSP said placements by foreign individuals and entities in banks in the Philippines registered last year a net deposit of $1.9 billion, reversing a net withdrawal of $134 million the previous year.

Officials said the deposit base of banks in the country was expected to grow further this year, aided in part by the continued rise in placements by foreigners.

The increased story on the deposit placements by foreigners was parallel to that of foreign portfolio investments.

Foreign portfolio investments, usually placements in stocks and bonds, registered a net inflow of $4 billion last year, compared with the $625-million net outflow in 2009, according to the revised balance of payments (BOP) report of the BSP.

Economists said the net inflow of foreign capital was not peculiar to the Philippines, but were witnessed by most emerging Asian economies last year.

They said foreign portfolio investors and fund managers have set their sights on emerging Asian economies because of their robust growth rates last year compared with those of industrialized countries.

## Groups slam ...

From page B1

against the already over-stressed carrying capacity of the environment and natural resources.

"More than anything, the previous MTPDP failed to consider that the environment is the most security system of the poor, and without environmental sustainability millions of Filipinos would be denied the opportunity to the natural resources," he said.

Bengzon said that because of environmentally unsustainable growth strategies, poverty has not been curbed, local security has not been achieved and the country's vulnerability to climate change has increased.

Clearly, the last decade was a lost decade for environment sustainability and sustainable development and more could have been done instead of this end.

"This is the challenge that President Aquino's MTPDP should address," Bengzon said.

The Caucus is Green the MTPDP includes, among others, Action for Economic Reforms, World Wildlife Fund Philippines and Green Power Everything Movement of the Philippines, Entrepreneur Southeast Asia, Haribon Foundation, Ecowaste Coalition, Philippine Fiscal Reconstruction Movement, Movement for the Advancement of Sustainable Agriculture, Partnerships for Clean Air and Earth-day Network Philippines.

## Supply disruptions ...

From page B1

the supply of goods and current, due to the sluggish Delta response in procurement of goods and materials directly related to reduction in orders and production as shown in many of the survey answers," the study noted.

In a recent interview, the manufacturing companies polled said they were knowledging the procurement of electronic products, expansion in local procurement and purchases from overseas manufacturers.

In an interview with reporters yesterday, Trade Undersecretary Cristino Panlilio said the government was keeping a close watch on the electronics and automotive industries, two key sectors that were expected to be the most badly hit by supply disruptions stemming from the Japan disaster.

He said one option that these companies, particularly those in auto assembly, could consider was the sourcing of local components and parts.

"We're giving them the options to make their spare parts here. In order if local parts by making factories can be ramp-up production," he said.

Toyota Motor Philippines Corp., the country's biggest seller of automobiles, said it has yet to assess the impact of the crisis on its operations.

The company assembles the popular Vios and Innova models in its Laguna plant. It also manufactures auto parts through Toyota auto Parts Inc.

# Amended mass housing item derails 2011 IPP completion

## Project cost cap reduced to P2.5 million in new listing

By Abigail L. Ho

THE P2.5-MILLION cost cap on mass housing units qualified to get tax holidays is the only hurdle to the completion of the 2011 Investment Priorities Plan, as developers push for the original cap of P3 million.

That was according to Trade-Undersecretary and Board of Investments managing head Cristino Panlilio.

"There was still some opposition from developers, There may even be some lobbying with some members of the Cabinet," Panlilio told reporters in an interview yesterday.

Despite this, he said the BOI was standing pat on its decision to reduce the cost cap, from the P3 million in the previous IPP.

"The BOI stands firmly on its decision. Middle-silly, P2.5 million) is the price that can be considered mass, affordable housing," he said. "It's what can be considered by 80-90 percent of the working population to be affordable housing. It's what we believe will benefit the mass (of) middle market."

He said the National Economic and Development Authority had accepted the P2.5-million mass housing cost cap that the BOI believed was just the appropriate amount for such projects to qualify for tax incentives under the IPP.

During the consultations for the 2011 IPP in early January housing developers lodged fierce opposition against the BOI's proposal to reduce the cost cap for mass housing units.

Even then, without having a concrete figure for the new cost cap, Panlilio said P3 million was simply too high a price for mass housing units.

In a position paper submitted to the BOI on mid-January, the Subdivision and Housing Developers Association Inc. (SHDA) said there was a shortage of housing units in the country, and reducing the cost ceiling to qualify for incentives might exacerbate this.

"The developers view this proposal with great concern," the paper stated, adding that the P3-million cap should be maintained in this year's IPP.

Among SHDA members were large developers Ayala Land Inc., Robinsons Land Inc. and SM Development Corp.—all of which were opposition to the lifting of tax breaks from condominiums to the more mid-middle-income markets.

## Coastal Road extension seen opening soon

By Paolo G. Montecillo

A SEIX seven-kilometer road that will cut the travel time from Metro Manila to highly populated areas in Southern Luzon will be fully opened in a month's time.

One lane of the extension of the R1 Metro Manila Coastal Tollway Project, commonly known as Coastal Road, from Zapote, Las Piñas to Kawit, Cavite, has already been opened to give motorists a taste of the benefits that the new road can give.

The road, however, is closed on evenings to give way for the remaining construction works that need to be done before the expressway is opened for full commercial operations.

URM Sitios Philippines' Urip., operator of Coastal Road, wants to charge class 1 vehicles P88 for using the road. Class 2 and class 3 vehicles will be charged P126 and P174, respectively, a computer notice sent to the Toll Regulatory Board (TRB) showed.

This will go on top of the current toll for the original section of the highway currently at P22 for class 1 vehicles, P66 for class 2 and P95 for class 3 vehicles. Motorists will not pay once through the entire road as it will be charged once.

The toll rate applied for by URM Sitios is one of the highest fees being charged in the country's privately run toll roads. Only fees at the Metro Manila Skyway are higher, at almost P6 per kilometer.

"The company said the extension is (close) 8, (civil)... is already 99-percent complete and they think they can finish it in a month," TRB spokesperson Julius Corpuz said in an interview.

"(Still More has) practically opened it only for (our) inspection," he said.

The new road is expected to ease traffic at the end of Coastal Road, which is used by about 60,000 vehicles daily as it connects commuters to Metro Manila's business districts from the suburbs from outskirts to the south.

## Pension funds push 'green' real estate investments

ELEVEN OF the world's largest pension asset managers, representing $1.1 trillion in assets under management, and some of the leading real estate industry investors have joined forces to create the Global Real Estate Sustainability Benchmark (GRESB).

The GRESB Foundation will do a yearly survey to evaluate the sustainability of fund managers in the real estate industry. The goal is to simultaneously create shareholder value and reduce the asset's substantial carbon footprint, by sending more transparency in the environmental sustainability of real estate investment managers.

The Global Real Estate Sustainability Benchmark follows the 2009 creation of a steering committee of the founding members (European pension asset managers APG, PGGM and ERAFP, which collaborated with Maastricht University (Netherlands) to measure the energy efficiency and sustainability of their real estate investments.

The GRESB foundation launched its first survey on March 28, and the collected data will provide a report for the 2011 benchmark.

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1 unit 4ft.X 8ft.hydraulic shearer 1.2mm.
1 unit 40X4 flat bar 7 rollers 1.2 mm.
1 unit 40X4 flat bar grooving machine
2 sets of 4 x 4 welding ground
Contact Person: Ms. Bebs Tarlac
Tel. No. 527-2883 Fax No. 527-2884
Email add: sandy@t_cama@yahoo.com.ph

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ATTY. RICARDO S. MARTINEZ, JR. CESO III
Regional Director

# OBITUARIES

*"Eternal Rest grant unto him, O Lord...*
*And let perpetual light shine upon him,*
*May he rest in peace."*

**John 11:25**

# Dr. ROD PARAS PEREZ

*Joined our Creator*
*on March 30, 2011*
*at the age of 76.*

His remains lie in state at the Chapel B, The Evergreen Chapels and Crematory C. Raymundo Avenue, San Miguel, Pasig City.

Cremation will be on Friday, April 1, 2011 after 10:00 a.m. Mass.

The Family requests your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

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# OBITUARIES

## ANTONIO M. ALBANO

*peacefully joined our Lord*
*on March 29, 2011 at the age of 68.*

*He is survived by his loving wife* ***Esperanza G. Albano****; children* ***Rosalito & Reggina Albano, Eric & Cynthia Albano, Leilani Albano*** *(†); grandchildren* ***Jenelle, Kazuya, Allison, Massimo (Pinky), Alonzo, Patrick Albano, Rizenne & Arvintar (Apple) Albano, Kristine (Tin) Albano*** *great-grandchild* ***Lauren Sophia Albano*** *other relatives and friends request please readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.*

*His remains lie in state at Sanctuario de San Jose, Greenhills, Mandaluyong City.*

*Interment will be on April 2, 2011, Saturday, after the 11:00 p.m. Mass at The Heritage Park, Bataan Road, Free Boutiques, Taguig City.*

# 2010 banner year for PH banks, profits up

By Michelle V. Ramos

UNIVERSAL AND commercial banks yielded a significant rise in profits last year, presenting optimism that a similar 2010 a banner year for the industry.

The combined net income of universal and commercial banks amounted to P83.4 billion last year, rising by 11 percent from P63.7 billion the previous year, data from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas showed.

Interest income reached P181 billion, net of expenses for interest on the funds sourced by banks), rising from P170 billion the previous year.

On the other hand, non-interest income—which is generated from non-banking activities, such as fund management and bills payment services, among others—amounted to P127 billion, up from P96 billion in 2009.

Increase in deposits, in turn, was aided by rising incomes and sustained confidence of individual and corporate depositors in the country's banking sector, they explained.

BSP Deputy Governor Nestor Espenilla Jr., who heads the bank supervision unit of the central bank, said, "We see that the country's banking sector is expected to remain profitable this year. Its real demand for banks loans and other banking services would grow and fuel increase of banks.

Regulators likewise expect bank resources, such as deposits, to grow this year, allowing banks to lend more to consumers and enterprises.

However, Espenilla also said the income of the banking sector this year may not match 2010 levels.

"Last year was a banner year for banks," he said.

# A quantum leap for GOCC corporate governance

POINT OF LAW
*FRANCIS LIM*

IS THE first State of the Nation Address, President Benigno Aquino III revealed that of the 26 government-owned or controlled corporations (GOCC), only seven received bonuses equivalent to as much as 30 months' salary, despite the ongoing losses of the MWSS.

This appeal prompted a Senate investigation into the government-owned or controlled corporations (GOCC), which revealed that our GOCC system was plagued by corporate governance weaknesses such as those prevalent in the MWSS.

The Senate inquiry also disclosed that a number of GOCCs account for a significant percentage of the assets, liabilities and expenses of the government. In 2009, expenditures of GOCCs were equivalent to 2.8 percent of the total expenditures of the national government. GOCC assets were estimated to be worth P1.537 trillion, while the assets of the rest of the national government were pegged at P1.079 trillion. The 2009 Annual Financial Report of the Commission on Audit (COA) indicated that GOCCs account for 9% percent of the total loan agency receivables of the national government.

These revelations prompted Senator Franklin M. Drilon to file Senate Bill No. 2566. The bill adopts many principles contained in the OECD Guidelines on Corporate Governance of State-Owned Enterprises.

*After months of committee hearings and interpellations on the Senate floor, the Senate approved the bill on third reading in SB No. 2640, otherwise known as the GOCC Governance Act of 2011.*

SB No. 2640 seeks to address problems in management, coordination and monitoring of GOCCs, to enable GOCCs to fulfill the purposes for which they were established, and to allow them to achieve fiscal stability and responsibility.

In his sponsorship speech, Senator Drilon noted that the inability of GOCCs to contribute to national development was due to lax governance and oversight, pointing out that the shocks and failures that come with private ownership are all usually missing from GOCCs.

### The GCG and its powers and functions

More than 160 GOCCs operate in the country with no single governing body to oversee their operations. For the first time in the history of our GOCC system, there will be a central governing body called the Governance Commission for Government-Owned or Controlled Corporations, or the GCG.

This body will act as an administrative monitoring and oversight body with authority to formulate, implement and monitor policies of the national government on GOCCs.

Certain powers and functions normally exercised by Congress have been delegated to GCG. For instance, the GCG is empowered to determine whether the GOCC should be reorganized, merged, consolidated, abolished or privatized, based on specific standards provided under SB No. 2640.

The GCG is empowered to implement the reorganization, merger and consolidation of GOCCs without waiting for a law from Congress.

### Corporate governance standards

The GCG is also tasked to adopt corporate governance standards for GOCCs. The majority of the board must be free from those provided by the SEC or PSE for listed companies, or the BSP or Insurance Commission with respect to GOCCs in the banking or insurance industry.

What this means is that the GCG can require GOCCs to have independent directors and set up specialized committees to support the board in performing its functions, particularly in respect to audit, risk management and remuneration.

In addition, the GCG is tasked to develop a compensation and position classification system for all officers and employees of GOCCs. The system shall apply to all GOCCs, whether or not controlled by the national government or GOCCs.

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The Senate and Commission on Appointments are not given any functions, allowances and bonuses are intended to make the GOCCs competitive with the private sector in attracting and maintaining the best talents, while at the same time curbing excessive salaries, bonuses and allowances.

### Check and balance

SB No. 2640 provides for certain check-and-balance mechanisms in the governance of GOCCs. The GCG is empowered to determine the necessary skills and qualifications needed by each GOCC board. The GCG is tasked to pass upon and review the qualifications of officers and directors/trustees of GOCCs and may disqualify any person from being elected or appointed as an officer or director if he "fit and proper" test mandated under SB No. 2640.

SB No. 2640 also provides that the top 20 GOCCs in terms of total assets will be subject to periodic audit by independent auditors, to be done by any of the top ten accounting and auditing firms in the country. Special and regular audits may also be directed as determined by the GCG. This independent audit is a novel concept as it is normally the COA which audits the operations of GOCCs.

### Regulatory vs. commercial activities

SB No. 2640 addresses concerns involving conflicts arising from GOCCs performing both regulatory and commercial functions. The GCG, once created, will not take over the regulatory powers of a GOCC but its commercial functions. This measure is aimed at ensuring a level playing field in areas where the GOCCs and private sectors compete in order to avoid market distortions as suggested in the OECD Guidelines.

### Transparency and disclosure

SB No. 2640 aims at fostering a culture of transparency and disclosure among our GOCCs. For example, it requires each GOCC to undertake an operational public review.

Among the things to be posted on the website are the GOCC's latest annual audited financial statement and performance report, quarterly financial reports and as of balance; current corporate operating budget; the complete compensation package of all the board members and officers including expenses or allowances; land and foreign borrowings; government subsidies and net lendings; and all bonds guaranteed by the government.

In addition, each GOCC shall make semi-annual progress reports to the GCG which, in turn, is required to submit its performance assessment on the GOCC to the President and Congress with its recommendations.

### Conclusion

The Senate versions SB No. 2640 not only to curtail the abuses in GOCCs, improve the service and ensure their financial viability but also allow GOCCs to contribute significantly to the economic development of the country. Not to be outdone, the House also passed on third reading a similar, although kindred, version of the bill under House Bill No. 4067. The bill is now pending at its bicameral conference committee.

Not too long from now, President Aquino will sign into law the "GOCC Governance Act of 2011," which definitely will be a legacy legislation of his administration. A quantum leap for GOCC governance, indeed!

*(The author, formerly the President and CEO of the Philippine Bank Exchange, is now the Co-Managing Partner and Head of the Corporate and Special Projects Department of Accralaw. He may be contacted at lfm@accralaw.com.)*

# People, Events & Products

## The Pinoy's free social networking site that rewards and pays

DOES YOUR social networking site provide you with an income opportunity? Does it give you discounts and privileges on hotels, shops, restaurants, business units and other establishments? How about the convenience of bills payment, cell phone loading, charity donations, money transfer, airline bookings, and more, all accomplished online without one web site? www.ideamerinternational.com does, and signing up is absolutely free. Visit their web address at www.ideamerinternational.com and discover how your time income-generating website can easily do all these things for you.

More rewarding online transactions are in store for everyone. These lifestyle economics that are likewise essentials for every business can be done with this newly launched web-base that works both as a social networking site and a multi-level marketing business powered by cash payments and bonuses. Considered in just a span of less than two months, i-Share Club Inc., a web-based company organized, designed and founded by a group of Filipino professionals, has reached as far as fifteen provinces countries and a hundred of major cities in its mission and thrust to change the way the existing business of doing business, earning and shopping are done worldwide. The company was launched on Jan. 28 at the Hotel H2O in Manila Ocean Park, Manila.

While building their own business community in the website, members are entitled to earn and save from every activity and transaction they make. Every time they buy products here that are connected to them, which converted to more accumulated purchase value points that are then converted into cash that goes to the member's bank account. It also enables members to help beneficiaries like affiliated charitable foundations and causes, while they also get rebates and enjoy discounts and bonuses from among i-Share's growing list of premium business partners and sponsors.

i-Share has announced its move to be integrated with a number of companies, including NEDS or network enabling companies, there by providing a platform or venue for many business activities and greater benefits for all its members and of course more revenues for its partner establishments as we focus in synergies with i-Share, and they will have free ads and registered members to all its websites.

Here it was even emphasized after the Dubai calamity at the heart of the whole concept of i-Share, are people especially Filipinos here and abroad, selflessly helping people and providing an avenue for more people to be encouraged in volunteering and making the joy of giving and sharing, something Filipinos should be proud of and support wholeheartedly. In fact, i-Share has its mission to elevate the socio-economic standing of its members and the country.

Indeed, because it's free, and no member is required to sell any product, inviting more new members is easy. Just advertise your personal web address (www.ideamerinternational.com/) by sending it through SMS and e-mail, or by posting it on their accounts at facebook, twitter, and other social media. For more information, call (02) 706-1900 or (02) 706-1901 or visit i-Share Club Inc at 8004 -8025 City and Land Mega Plaza, ADB Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City, where free 15-minutes orientation seminar is held from Mondays to Fridays at 3, 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. You may also e-mail to info@ideamerinternational.com.

## Best Practices in Manualization of School HR Policies

THE CENTER for Global Best Practices (CGBP) will be holding a pioneering seminar entitled "Best Practices in Manualization of School HR Policies" on April 7 and 8. Thursday and Friday, from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the Peninsula Hotel, Makati City. This seminar workshop program is a comprehensive and practical guide for school owners, administrators and HR managers and practitioners on how to properly and systematically create a working manual and handbook of HR policies that is aligned with enhancing labor laws as well as with ISO and Legal requirements.

Those with existing schools and others who are planning to have one will greatly benefit from the wealth of information that is rarely discussed and prepared by lawyer Eva Iris T. Del Rosario, M.D.L., who is both a labor and education lawyer with extensive experience in crafting school HR policy manuals and handbooks for personnel, faculty and students. The unique program will also feature Ramon de Leon, who was the managing director of Manila Doctors and his retirement in 2004. Personality, his advocacy is in volunteerism, the school system and the norms as the VP for Human Resources of the Technological Institute of the Philippines.

Interested participants are encouraged to avail of the early bird and group discounts. Details and the registration forms of this limited-seats early event are available at CGBP's website www.cgbp.org or you may call participants office Katrina Reyes at (02)843-7149; 09 (02) 506-9969; 09 Calina Rose (02)233-1106/07 or e-mail her loadcgbp.org. This is a limited seats only event and pre-registration is required.

## Futa Cancer Hospital's cancer seminar

AIMING TO educate people on the benefits of early detection on the success of cancer treatment and to help cancer patients with information on new treatment and success stories, expert doctors from the Futa Cancer Hospital in Guangzhou, China are once again holding a free cancer seminar in the Philippines. Entitled "Cancer Free Seminar", the seminar will be held in the Lucky Chinatown Hotel, Don Jose Avenue, Binondoan, Angeles City, Pampanga - along Fastening Avenue on Saturday, April 2, 9 to 12 p.m. Consultation follows at 2 p.m. to 10 p.m. The Futa Cancer Hospital - Guangzhou, an affiliate of the Guangzhou Institute of Biomedicine and Health Chinese Academy of Science, is one of the world's leading cancer treatment centers.

Among the doctors from the hospital who will be the seminar's guest speakers: Leading the seminar is Prof. Xu Hanliang, MD, the chief president of the hospital and a world-renowned and multi-awarded oncologist, professor and author. He is also a specialist in oncosurgery and one of the first to adopt cannular intervention, stress intensive alternative to surgery, forming him to the hospital's division of radiology. Dr. Phan Kiang Hai, eminent radiologist and Dr. Lee Kwok Cheong, oncologist will also be present. They will be studied The Cancer Effectiveness Base Material Package, a presentation now being used globally. Also attending is Dr. Ma. Regina Mc Millan, the director of the cancer unit and services, as a deputy director for surgical oncology. The three medical experts and practitioners will discuss cancer screening as a key to early detection and treatment, as well as their famous specialties in radio-chemotherapy, chemotherapy and surgical oncology. Those who plan to consultation in Makati on Sunday, April 3, 8 a.m. to 12 noon at Dermatima Clinic, 2nd/3 M. The Gallery Building, Ayala Ave. Makati. Call (02) 750-0000 local 2 or Text 0917-8000-888 for more information and reservations.

## 4th Annual Chili's Big Mouth Burger Day

TIME TO get your burger on. Raw bigger and better, Chili's 4th Annual Big Mouth Burger Day happens on Tuesday, April 5. For one day only, Chili's humongous and world-famous Big Mouth Burgers can be enjoyed for only P135. It's their way of saying "Thank You" to loyal guests, and everyone is invited to join the celebration. Guests can choose from either an all-beef or a delicious chicken option and can even customize their burger to give ordinary (and limited to one burger per guest). Chili's Big Mouth Burger Day promo covers all of Chili's burgers, except for Burger Bites. Have the classic Chilibuger with smoked shredded lettuce, tomatoes, pickle and onion. For those who want something a little tastier, have the Bacon Burger or the extra crispy BBQ Ranch. You can also have the Mushroom Swiss, fresh sautéed mushrooms and aged Swiss cheese for that extra indulgence you needs. Enjoy your favorite Chili's Big Mouth Burger at participating branches from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. to 12 midnight for all Chili's restaurants, and until 8 p.m. for Chili's Inn. Gear up for the most awaited burger promo this side of town. Mark April 5 on your calendars for Chili's 4th Annual Big Mouth Burger Day at branches in Greenbelt 5, Makati (709-0825); Greenhills, San Juan (727-2906); Tomas Morato, Quezon City (373-9015); and Chili's Taste Panel, Rockwell (896-6527).

## Whirlpool holds laundry seminar

AS PART of its corporate citizenship program and to assist intended homemakers to start an effective and profitable laundry business, Whirlpool Philippines is holding a laundry seminar on April 13 and 30 from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. at the Rockwell Building No. 50 Corinthian St., cor. J. Rodriguez St. Avenue, Quezon City. Participants in this seminar will learn the important steps on how to put up a laundry business and will be taught the rudiments of doing laundry. They will also be introduced to available machines, detergents and other elements to use. Likewise, they will be instructed on the laundry equipment, detergents and dry-cleaning solvents as well as the details of business financing. Interested participants will be charged a fee of P1,000 inclusive of lunch, snacks and seminar handouts to be shared throughout the session. Participants may register on or before March 31 and take advantage of the P1,000 "Early Bird" promo. For questions regarding the seminar, you may contact Cecilia Cabrera or Kennedy Miguel at 113-0636.

## Scrapaholics' World at Robinsons Metrowest

START TODAY! Get your bells and get on board for the summer scrapping trip of your life. Welcome to Scrapaholics' World where everybody stands out. French fries the successful launch in Glorietta 5, Scrapaholics' World is back and is ready to raise some serious scrapbooking fun for the soul. Catch all the action on April 1, 10 a.m. at the Robinsons Metrowest Activity Center and learn great pieces and scrapbooking tricks from Vivian Tiongson, Scrapaholics' resident scrapbooking expert. Get inspired and the fellow scrapaholics at the metric, see exciting prizes and meet the makers of your favorite Additional Scrapbooking products face to face. It really can't get any better than this.

## Great sound on a sound budget

THE HISTORICAL Makati Church, dedicated to Our Lady of Remedies, recently had a "makeover". The people were all smiles for the "superior quality" of the speakers, bathing the grand and majestic atmosphere of Makati Church. Over the years, installing sound systems in churches and other places of worship has become the expertise of Lexus Audio System, in pursuit of excellence in sound reproduction. Lexus has developed speakers and audio products that are the choice of any religious institutions or individuals. Even the limitations on loudness considered by Lexus. Installers and venue's all-power full, expensive sound systems are truly needs at a budget anyone can easily afford. That's why it didn't need a big collection or a major fund raising project for the church to enjoy the Lexus experience. They got the better choice at a lesser package cost. Not only that, Lexus' sound engineers can make a difference. Even the expert sound engineers and audio professionals would attest to the quality and reliability of Lexus. Sound broadcasting networks and major music producers have installed Lexus audio systems in their studios. They believe that each and every Lexus product offers unmatched performance, delivers exceptional sound reproduction quality under all kinds of conditions. Lexus products has its TV studios. Lexus Audio products have truly great phone, breathing sound systems, delivering clean and dynamic audio quality.

## Capiz HS Class '66 sets homecoming

A SPECIAL anniversary and homecoming celebration awaits the members of Capiz High School Class '66 in Roxas City from May 7 to 8. Lawyer Rolando Rigoan Lumayong, president of the organizing committee and chair of the 45th (Sapphire) anniversary celebration announced that the organizing committee has lined up a series of fun-filled activities such as a motorcade around Roxas City, body mania to follow near the Capiz High School grounds on the first day, and a family day and election and induction of officers on the second day. For inquiries, contact Lawyer Orlando Rigoan Lumayong at (077) 9888837 in Roxas City or Major General Raul Rolando (retired) at (02) 4043980 in Manila.

# BUSINESS

## Benguet '10 income hits ₱2.4B

BENGUET CORP. said its subsidiaries reported a consolidated net income of P2.4 billion for 2010, representing a 1,195 percent rise from 2009's P186 million level.

Earnings per share stood at P18.14.

The positive performance in 2010 was due mainly to the settlement of Benguet's obligations, increase in production and the rise in the world market prices for gold and nickel, which benefited the company's Acupan contract mining contract and Rio Cruz Nickel project.

The consolidated financial statement of the company, as audited by external auditors SGV & Co., was approved at the meeting of the Benguet board on March 29.

Benguet continues to expand its gold operations this year by ramping up the Acupan gold mining project to 2,000 tons per day and the development of Balatoc Tailings Project, the Rio Cruz nickel and gold tailings recovery project in the country. Subsidiary Benguet Corp Nickel Mines Inc. (BCNMI) is also soon expanding its operations in Rio Cruz, Barlobo.

## PH expects increased investments from Spain

By Abigail L. Ho

Companies keen on PPP projects

PUBLIC and private companies in Spain are eyeing a significant increase in investments in the Philippines.

Spanish businesses are considering making the Philippines their gateway to southeast Asia.

In a briefing yesterday, Spain's Secretary of State for Foreign Trade Alfonso Dastis said the country was not satisfied with the low level of investments than Spanish companies had in the Philippines.

Meeting forums, and especially with the government's public-private partnership project portfolio in place, he said "both the public and private sectors in Spain were willing to pitch more aggressive on the Philippine economy."

"The Philippines is the latest country with which we've had the longest and most specific bilateral ties. We're not satisfied with the small investments we have here. The Philippines can be an important platform for our doing business in Southeast Asia," he said.

Spanish envoy to the Philippines Jorge Dezcallar added that the Philippines would continue to be the "priority country in Asia" for official development assistance from Spain.

In the next few months, he said Spanish government officials would be sitting down with their Philippine counterparts to discuss which projects Spanish firms could participate in, especially among those projects on the PPP list.

"We'll define the main sectors to concentrate our efforts in developing over the next four years," he added. "The aid amount will depend on the economic situation as well as on the projects that the Philippine government wants to prioritize."

In a separate interview, Trade Undersecretary and Board of Investments managing head Cristino Panlilio said a number of Spanish companies had already expressed interest in either setting up shop here or expanding their current business ventures in the country.

Among those twice daily president manufacturer Grupo Leche Pascual, oil exploration firm Cairn Energy, electricity facilities, and wind power company Gamesa.

He said Leche Pascual was inclined to invest at least $10 million to put up a yogurt manufacturing facility in the country. Talks are underway with San Miguel Corp. for a possible distribution agreement.

The planned facility would initially serve the domestic market, he said, but could eventually expand to become the Spanish firm's export hub for the region.

Union Fenosa, which already had a partnership with Bulgaria's Global Solar Corp. for the development of Iberdrola Gamesa 42 in offshore Batanes Island in Palauan, also indicated plans to beef up its local investments, he said.


# FedEx International Economy delivers cost-efficiency to businesses

Strategic planning and intelligent decision-making is everything in the world of business. Whether you are a starting entrepreneur or a veteran in your industry, an effective management of time and resources could define how far your business will go. No wonder many businesses rely on solutions providers such as FedEx, which offers value savings through delivery options that meet their logistical needs.

Businesses looking for flexible, reliable international delivery options can benefit from FedEx International Economy (IE) service. This is an economical, day-definite, customs-cleared, door-to-door service that can deliver intra-Asia packages in two business days, and shipments to the U.S. and major European markets in three to four business days. The FedEx IE service costs approximately 21 percent less than the FedEx International Priority overnight service.*

By allowing an extra day or two for the shipment to arrive at its destination, customers can manage costs while still enjoying the same service quality from FedEx.

**Freedom to choose cost-efficiency and competitiveness**

Logistics has now become essential to many business' competitive strategy and growth. A company's size has become less important to its success. Global sourcing and selling are giving companies access to broader markets and resources, letting them become more competitive with one another.

By planning your logistical needs ahead of time and by taking advantage of international transport solutions like FedEx International Economy service, you are able to maximize value for your customers and for your business.

It is an opportune time for entrepreneurs to make strategic decisions when it comes to business processes such as logistics. The new Philippine Export Development Plan (PEDP) recently reported that the Philippine export scene is gearing up to double exports in six years by selling over USD100 billion worth of goods abroad by 2016. This is encouraging to entrepreneurs and companies who want to take advantage of opportunities in the export sector.

**Providing greater access to the world**

FedEx is committed to improving access - a significant impetus for positive change in the world. The ability for people and businesses to connect to one another and to what they need ultimately creates opportunity and stimulates economies.

In particular, FedEx recognizes the importance of small and medium enterprises to the region's economy. As a facilitator of trade in the Asia Pacific, FedEx is well positioned to help SMEs seek out emerging opportunities by focusing on extensive global connectivity and broad portfolio of products to provide relevant, value-added services to help customers compete more effectively.

In addition to day-definite shipping options, it is also vital for SMEs to harness the power of technology to facilitate their business development when they go international.

Just in January this year, FedEx launched new iPhone and Blackberry applications and enhanced the FedEx mobile website in Asia Pacific. These applications allow customers to track the status of their package and use "My FedEx Tracking" for additional shipment details, get rate quotes, schedule pick-ups, and find nearby FedEx locations. The service is especially useful for SMEs customers who are constantly on-the-go and do not have access to bare office support on their shipping needs.

In addition, FedEx provides dedicated software solutions targeted at helping small businesses compete better at the global level. The Small Business Resource Center on fedex.com provides customized navigation, logistical tools and resources to give small businesses added convenience when making international shipments.

The FedEx online service finder helps small businesses determine the most suitable and economical service for shipments. It is also pre-sending customers from paying for more speed than they need.

To help customers overcome confusing customs regulations, duties and taxes, FedEx offers the free FedEx Global Trade Manager online tool which simplifies international shipping by identifying the documents needed for shipping to more than 200 countries. The free, online resource even calculates various taxes and duties needed in the process.

Another useful tool is FedEx ImportOne which allows customers to operate in one currency, removing the anxiety and bureaucracy of having to deal with different currencies and fluctuating rates when importing goods from abroad to help customers manage the cost.

**FedEx commitment to Philippine businesses**

FedEx believes companies that adapt and innovate proactively to deal with the changes, opportunities and uncertainties of a global trade world, are in a better position to weather economic fluctuations and pull ahead of competitors.

FedEx is committed to helping companies in the Philippines grow and achieve goals cost-efficiently, whether those goals are thriving with new markets, expanding a product range or going global.

FedEx IE service is available to individual packages under 68 kg, with no weight restrictions for multi-piece shipments. The service is also available in ten other APAC markets, including Australia, mainland China, Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore, Taiwan and Thailand.

For further information on FedEx International Economy and other services, you may call hotline number (02) 555-8484.

LIFESTYLE Food
Editor Thelma Sioson San Juan

LIGHT seafood by chicken adobo

# Chicken 'adobo' in olive oil, with tomatoes, potatoes —and 'kamote'

Nancy Harell's healthier, lighter version floats in very little sauce, with sweet flavor from the 'kamote'

By Margie Baja-Reyes

GARFIELD — By JIM DAVIS

A. LUPIN — By JESS ABRERA

PUGAD BABOY — By ROY LUCES

DICK TRACY

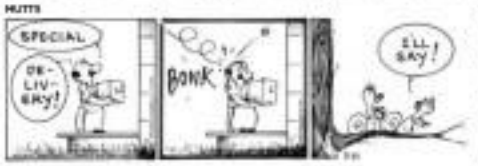
LOKSINGKITS — By ELIZABETH CHONGUIO

BABY BLUES — By JERRY SCOTT

ROBO MACHINE — By RANDY ABREN

BEN — By DANIEL SHELTON

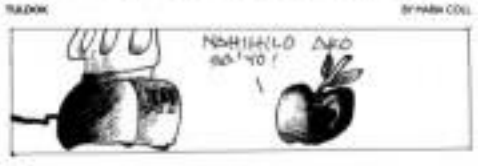
HUTTS




SHERMAN'S LAGOON — By JIM TOOMEY

DUSTIN — By STEVE KELLEY AND JEFF PARKER

TULDOK — By RAMA COLL



## HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCES CHAVZ

**YOU BORN TODAY** Words set a perfect mood for romantic evenings. Add a touch of color, especially something you've been wanting to. Interpret the scenes. Any kind of word runs its entire course. Let go of the problem.

**ARIES (March 21 to April 19)** You have a lot of energy today to finish off jobs, especially something you've been wanting to. Interpret the scenes. Any kind of word runs its entire course. Let go of the problem.

**TAURUS (April 20 to May 20)** You likely will encounter someone who'll set your body. Hopefully in a group situation. This person helps you to see things differently. Let go of the problem.

**GEMINI (May 21 to June 20)** Group events, business and VIPs might see you in a new light today. They see you as more successful and clever at coming up with organizational ideas or improvements. Cool!

**CANCER (June 21 to July 22)** Discussions with others might cause you to change your views about politics, religion or moral issues today. This is something we MIGHT anticipate.

**LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22)** Take a new look at your approach to shared projects today. Perhaps there's a better way of doing or organizing things.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22)** You're quite multi-talented with numbers and detail today, because people are ready to pay for you as a result in your desire to "improve" something that's already well-oiled? (And it really can.)

**LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22)** If you have new ideas about how to improve your job, speak up. You might see ways to cut costs or find better uses for equipment that at present.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21)** Some of your extra work or are you bored to death? Let extra good ideas today go to waste. Perhaps you're improving your approach in the wrong way. This could hurt. Whatever applies to the one and the underlying need exists.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21)** This is a good day to do unpleasant jobs or those you've been putting off. Or perhaps some of these are the ones you've been putting off. Take a look!

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19)** You're unusually inventive today. Your connections (NOW) can help you call, market, teach or sell, or entertain anyone of significance.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18)** You know of a job you'll see a new source of income or perhaps a different job. Some unlikely might see ways to make a little money on the side. Keep your eyes open!

**PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20)** Take a realistic look at the money today. What can you do to improve the situation you're in the world?

## CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

**HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU**

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Tips and programs at www.sudoku.com

Answers to previous puzzle

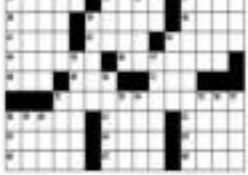
| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 2 |
| 9 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 6 | 8 | 7 |
| 4 | 5 | 2 | 6 | 8 | 7 | 3 | 9 | 1 |
| 8 | 6 | 7 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 9 | 1 | 4 |
| 3 | 2 | 1 | 7 | 9 | 4 | 8 | 6 | 5 |
| 5 | 9 | 4 | 8 | 6 | 1 | 7 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 3 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 9 | 2 | 7 | 8 |
| 2 | 8 | 9 | 1 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 3 | 4 |
| 7 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 8 | 1 | 4 | 6 |

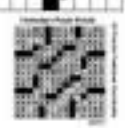
**Conceptis Sudoku** By Dave Green

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | | 1 | | | | 4 | | 8 |
| | | | 1 | | 6 | | | |
| 8 | | | | 9 | | | | 1 |
| | 2 | | | | | | 5 | |
| | | 6 | | | | 3 | | |
| | 3 | | | | | | 8 | |
| 5 | | | | 6 | | | | 7 |
| | | | 4 | | 9 | | | |
| 4 | | 9 | | | | 5 | | 3 |

Medium Level ★★★

## CROSSWORD PUZZLE





# 'Kalbi,' 'bulgogi,' 'bibimbap'—the yin and yang of Korean food

THERE is more to Korean food than kalbi and bulgogi. In fact, it is one of the most interesting, intricate and most vigorously prepared cuisines in the world, with culinary dancing back centuries.

Korean food is philosophical, according to Rina Park-ayres, director of the Institute of Royal Cuisine. Korean food is a great source of energy—it goes beyond physical strength. Food and medicine are grown from the same root, Chun Gun, there is no better medicine than food.

Rina adds that the principles of yin and yang plus the five elements explain how all things in nature grow on the basis of interaction. The five energies, energies like elements (wood, fire, soil, metal and water) and five cardinal colors (blue, red, yellow, white and black), corresponding to the five basic elements.

"Colored ingredients are blended, thus producing foods that allow the body to efficient to absorb the necessary and vitamins the appetite through the five essential tastes—salty, hot, sweet, bitter and sour.

"Korea's court cuisine is very generous and assorted, and the dishes on the royal table combination-matched-others.

"Serving (royal table) consists of 12 side dishes, and three is one for that. Each side dish is different in color, divided into yin and yang energy foods.

"Most dishes and vegetable dishes are served using different cooking methods and arranged differently as well. When all 12 dishes are arranged on the table, you will taste umami."

## Food culture

I was fortunate to have had the chance to sit down and ask Lee Dokyung, general manager of the seven in upon Korean Cultural Center (which will offer authentic Korean cooking lessons to Ding's Seong Un Hwang, director of the Korean Cultural Center and Consulate for Culture and Public Affairs of the Embassy of the Republic of Korea; and Eng Seong Who, chef of Kaya Restaurant, some questions about their food offerings.

"The base taste of raw food is spicy, but it is different from dish to dish. The characteristic taste of Korean food is, in fact, all five tastes," says Lee Dokyung and chef Eng Seong Who.

**What is a typical Korean meal?**

"All meals always have rice and soup, then we have bulgogi, *kimchi*—as Americans table (dishes). Our main course is the side soup.

"If we don't have the side soup, it is more a meal. Unlike the way Americans eat, each person has a bowl of rice and soup, set with a spoon and chopsticks in the right, then the banchan side dishes, spread in the center of table. There are hundreds of recipes of different side dishes in Korea.

"We have soup and rice for breakfast, lunch and dinner, but the number of side dishes depends from family to family. Usually during breakfast and lunch, there are two or three. One biggest meal is dinner, so our family will have five.

"In the past, mothers and wives cooked all the meals, but today, many dine out. Our food is based on proper because of the many side dishes, and our food industry now is very diverse...you can say anything you want."

## Imperial and regular meals

"The main difference between an imperial meal and a regular meal is that royal cuisine makes use of as many ingredients from the land, sea, mountain. Also, the chef thinks a lot of the presentation and decoration.

"Ingredients that give a different character to Korean food include soy sauce, bagoong, chili powder and sesame seeds.

**"Kimchi contains the most popular Korean dish so as Kimchi, there are so many different kinds of it."**

According to Lee Dokyung, "Fermented food is a big part of our cuisine. Fermentation brings out benefits and good bacteria for good health and nutrition."

How about Ichimbap, now rigged as the new super health food, made popular by Dr. Mao of Gwyneth Paltrow? Of course, here is done with brown rice.

According to Lee Dokyung, Seong Un Hwang and chef Eng Seong Who, "Bibimbap means mixed dish or dish/meal to be mixed."

"There are different kinds of bibimbap—that's why the name of the city comes before bibimbap. The most famous is Jeonju-style bibimbap—the cooking round is known and cooked down, the dong-style bibimbap has mixed vegetables, and Yongsoung-style bibimbap is served with seaweed.

"What makes bibimbap different from one place to another, is to find only the best authentic ingredients grown from a certain part/area of Korea to give each province its own kind of bibimbap."

Short break. Bibimbap ended.

I would like to thank the Korean Cultural Office—Lee Dokyung, Seong Un Hwang, Hiroki Peleciano and Kaya's chef Eng Seong Who and owner Hui-Cia Ha for all their help.

*for my summer diet schedule and promos that start now send for beginners, teens and household cooks, call 0917-3140700 / 0908-2372346/ 4898895/ 5286295.*

*E-mail the author at rosp.ria@inquirer.com.ph.*


KITCHEN RESCUE

Angelie Aspiras


# Low-cost ceramic brick oven and charcoal

WORD OF MOUTH

Sandy Daza

**Ceramic fire bricks**

Yesley, Arry Ya has perfected the oven made of ceramic fire bricks. Temperature in these ovens go as high as 400 with degrees, and can finish a nice, crusty and bubbling pizza in less than 3 minutes. It can also bake beautiful and moist cakes, nicely browned roast chicken and anything a normal convection oven can do. The ovens come with temperature gauges.

His barbecue grillers are also a winner. The use of charcoal is very traditional and the heat is re-

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# RMHC and Roxas Foundation, Partners in Reading, Support BMR

The Ronald McDonald House Charities, the charity of choice of McDonald's, together with the Roxas Foundation and Central Azucarera Don Pedro Inc., supports the Bright Minds Read's (BMR) mission of having zero non-readers in the country. Recently, a Municipal Puppetry Storytelling Contest was held at the CADP Game House in Nasugbu Batangas that showcased the reading skills of students from the different elementary schools in the province that are all under the BMR program.

Participants were tasked to give life to the story "Bidyo sa Bilog", one of the 15 storybooks published in the BMR series published by Mrs. Juliana Henson, Mary A. Hayness, Marianne B. Dan, Angelica O. Rosales, Elizabeth M. Cuesig, Bryan B. Villar, and Christian Paul E. Mendoza from Balaytarsan Elementary School emerged as 1st place winners with their creative and masterful storytelling skills — a testament of their improved reading and comprehension skills under the BMR program.

Launched in 2002, BMR is an initiative implemented with Department Orders beginning reading to Grade 3 public school students through reading booklets. Each booklet consists of 15 storybooks, student worksheets and a teacher's lesson plan. Together with long-time donors like the Roxas Foundation and Central Azucarera Don Pedro Inc., BMR is currently in more than 2,000 public schools nationwide including ARMM.


Privado Luxury Sale at SM Megamall Atrium

Luxe becomes so affordable at SM Accessories' Privado Four Day Luxury Sale from March 31 to April 3, 2011 at the SM Megamall Atrium.

Shop in high style and enjoy up to 50% off on selected eyewear, watches, and jewelry from over 75 luxury brands. These include iconic brands like Ray Ban and Ferrari, and designer items from D&G, Gucci, Escada, and CK; as well as contemporary brands like Guess, Kopiti, and Police.

Do not miss SM Accessories' Privado Four Day Luxury Sale from March 31 to April 3 at the SM Megamall Atrium.

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Small pearl bracelet with a ring via from P8C

Baroque pearl bracelet from P&C

Bracelet watch by Swiss

Vintage eyewear by Yves Saint Laurent

Eyewear with animals by Armani Exchange

Quantum of Solace aviators by Tom Ford

Pilot Eyewear by Tom Ford

# Lamb curry, Tandoori Stuffed Bell Pepper–authentic Indian cuisine in Manila

By Irene C. Perez

THE WORD Heer has come to love Indian food that's spicy, strong, bold and has that lingering taste—and even that makes for cuisine memorable and interesting. The generous mix of chili, curry, paprika and Asian condiments that Indian lovers have a little more and you'll discover sweet, fragrant cinnamon, perhaps a tick of tangy lime, or a fresh tinge of crushed coriander leaves.

If you are quite authentic Indian food, Heer restaurant at Eden Heritage (a.k.a Bonifacio) has embraces "India Spice Adventures" food festival until April 3, prepared by guest chef Abhijeet Ali from Shangri-La's Eros Hotel in New Delhi.

He and Eden Heritage resident chef Jeremiah Hall, and executive chef Jeff Jimenez finalized the menu, a combination of North and South Indian specialties.

## Lamb curry

Executive chef Jeremiah explained: "India has one of the world's oldest cuisines. North Indian food is made creamy with yogurt and cream, usually roasted meat, grilled with subtle, flat bread like chapati and roti, while Southern cuisine has more soy and tofu based with coconut."

Lamb entrées include Bhuna Methi Gosht (lamb and fenugreek leaves) and Gosht Awadhi Korma (lamb with onion and tomato). For chicken, there's Kadhai chicken with onion and tomato) and Bhuna Murg Tikka (creamy chicken cubes). Lighter selections are Machali Mandalay (fish with coriander) and Subzi Biryani (a potpourri of greens, chicken and mushroom).

What Heer restaurant serves is the exact food you'd have when you dine in New Delhi

These can be paired with chutney or dips in several varieties: Imli (tamarind and pepper) or cucumber yogurt; Mango, Yellow Dopiaza and tomato-chilli's. Pudina (mint) and Indi Mudia (potato and lentil).

Heer serve also Gobhi paratha—with cauliflower, curry, mixed spices and panir; Rajma Kulchaar (roasted kidney beans) and Seekya Ghost (sweet dry vegetable) and dried fruit cooked in milk) on the side. There are also nonspicy dishes like Aviyeal and Nagarcoil Pakoos or kitchenstyle vegetables.

## Black salt and cinnamon 'lassi'

Chef Ajeet said what they serve in Heer is the exact food you'd have when you dine in New Delhi, and nothing was tweaked for the Filipino palate.

Balance of all the heavy meal with refreshing drinks like the yoghurt-based lassi (which comes in black salt and cinnamon), milk and sugar, and mango and milk flavors.

To celebrate Philippine Independence, Heer is inviting the public "Seventh Guest Diner, Free." For every group of seven, the seventh diner gets a complimentary buffet, also until April 3.

The Indian menu is available at Eden Heritage's Le Cheer restaurant, a la carte or on the lunch and dinner buffet. Call 6559888 local 2777 or 8077, e-mail irene.reyesperez@edenheritage.com.

PALAYA and Chicken Tandoori

VEGETABLE (Biryani, Pulao, Lamb Roganjosh, Chicken Curry and Aloo Gobi)

GREEN salad and Aloo Cheen Dost

## Kache Murg Biryani

(Chicken Biryani Rice)
1 k basmati rice (washed)
1.5 k chicken
300 g onion (sliced)
50 g garlic (paste)
50 g ginger (50 g paste, 30 g julienne)
100 g green chili pepper
50 g coriander (fresh, chopped)
50 g fresh mint (leaf)
50 g turmeric (powder)
20 g cardamom
20 g cinnamon (powder)
10 g clove
20 g salt
5 g bay leaf
100 g saffron
200 g milk
200 g ghee
50 g garam masala (powder)
Water

Marinate chicken with garlic paste, salt, sugar, 10 g turmeric and yogurt.

Heat ghee and add whole spices, ½ of all ingredients.

Add marinated chicken cooked until half tender; set aside.

In another pan, boil water with remaining turmeric and half of the remaining whole spices including half of the fresh mint. Cook halfway.

When ready, strain the rice and mix the chicken layer by layer, also with fried onions. Garnish Masala, ginger, green chili pepper, mint and coriander leaves.

Cover with foil and put inside the oven. Cook for another 15-35 minutes under slow fire. Serve hot.

## Bharwan Ragin Mirchiya

(Tandoori Stuffed Bell Pepper)
10 g capsicum, red, yellow and green
50 g cashew nut
100 g paneer (grated)
50 g raisins
100 g onion
200 g cabbage
100 g beans
50 g pineapple
20 g coriander leaves
25 g green chili pepper
5 g chili powder
5 g garam masala
5 g cumin (powder)
10 g salt
30 ml ghee
5 g cardamom
50 g ginger garlic paste

Chop the vegetables, slice the capsicum in half and remove seeds. Heat oil in a sauté pan, put cumin seed, ginger, garlic and chopped vegetables. Cook for 7-10 minutes.

Mix in all remaining spices and sauté for another 5 minutes. Add cashew nut, grated paneer and raisins.

When ready, stuff the mixture inside the green, red and yellow capsicum. Cook inside the tandoori oven.

Serve hot with mint chutney, onion rings and lemon wedges.

# Chicken 'adobo' in olive oil, with tomatoes, potatoes–and 'kamote'

From page A1

the ordinary fatty cooking oil.

She also favors balsamic vinegar over the locally available and historically based liquid. This she blends with light soy sauce (Kikkoman brand) to achieve subtlety.

"I also cook the traditional adobo we grew up with, but my husband likes healthy stuff so I cater to whatever all the times," says Hood, a retired advertising and public relations consultant who sets at the business for 27 years.

To give additional texture and color to this dish, she garnishes it with slices of potatoes and sweet potatoes (kamote).

"The potatoes serve as balancing ingredient to the acidity of the balsamic vinegar," notes Hood, who has three children—Jacob, Thane and David, now grown and based in Canada, are also into healthy food.

So, the healthy twist raises adobo to flavorsome heights, both in taste and presentation. The chicken emerges as tender to the bite, floating in very little sauce with sweet flavor from the kamote. The aroma of sweet garlic and the mingled nuances of the balsamic vinegar are perfectly balanced and explode subliminous.

In a way, Hood's reactions of adobo as a complete meal in itself, with proteins and carbohydrates combined.

"We normally eat adobo just right with enough sauce," says Hood. "But, if you want a darker dish, you can also use the local brands of soy sauce."

Hood doesn't put some to her adobo because the chicken already carries many.

"And according to my Kapampangan mother, if you add some in adobo, sugging/makasa. I never question it," she says.

Hood sometimes adds mashed chicken liver to make the sauce richer and thicker.

"You can also substitute the potatoes and kamote with gabi (taro) or sagging na saba," she says.

## Chicken Adobo Mediterranean-style

1 kg chicken breast and thighs
1 medium bawl onion, chopped
1 medium bawl garlic, chopped
3 tbsp balsamic vinegar
3 tbsp olive oil
4 tbsp Kikkoman soy sauce
2 pcs sweet potatoes (kamote), cubed
2 pcs potato, cubed
Whole peppercorns, crushed

NAPKIN Hood prefers to use balsamic vinegar in her adobo.

Sauté garlic, onions and tomatoes in olive oil in a casserole pan. Add chicken (Cook is optional, but you should cook it should of chicken). Add soy sauce, vinegar, salt and pepper.

In another pan, fry potatoes till half done. Set aside.

When meat is tender, add potatoes and bay leaf. Let simmer on low heat until the sauce and the potatoes. Serve hot.

Note: Do not add water at any stage of the cooking.

E-mail the author at ringgitte.quintos@gmail.com.ph.

# Low-cost ceramic brick oven . . .

From page F1

time into a long, long time. He has even have better efficiency than your ordinary tabletops.

He has invented one that can easily facilitate to go high pressure with the words of a tray has attached to the side of the burner, it works on the same principle as blowing on the burning charcoal to hasten the fire. There are all smoke-free, except the grilles.

The principle behind it is, the charcoal is heated using small pieces of wood soaked in denatured alcohol. It takes just a few minutes for the coal to burn up. The ceramic bricks then absorb the heat and retain it. When the bricks are hot enough, the combustion of coal drops significantly and all one has to do is drop a few additional coals to remain the heat.

Heat is controlled by dialing clear or opening windows on the side and cutting the air off or letting it in. That's how he helps save some coal for future use.

Except for the grilles, the oven and burner are self-cleaning. Because of high heat, almost nothing gets stuck on the hot bricks. Powdered sand and Bon Ami brushes is the bricks into a pan that slides out for easy cleaning.

But do not get black on the bottom of the burners. For the ovens, the heat is equally distributed all over for the grilles, there is hardly any smoke except for the sauce dripping on the charcoals. The two colors are smokeless.

## Minimal consumption

I have used these products in my lunchbox outside. For all my grilled items, I consume P.6 worth of coal, grilling for whole morning. For cooking the rest of the food items as well as simmering sauces, I use the high pressure, because just to pick up the taste, then lower down when I get the right temperature.

My gas consumption has dropped by half and the ovens work as efficiently at a fraction of the cost. In fact, I have been suspected of tampering with the gauges, given the sudden drop in my gas consumption. I am in the process of getting LPG pressure ceramic energy. There are also begun using this as my heater to cook everything.

Every home and restaurant should use these inventions. That should help lower our prices and our dependence on oil. Chemical consumption is very minimal.

Henry better that names to our dream so soon should have them, too. Jerry does contacts inside accident depending on one's needs. Call him for a demo or visit his showroom. Prices are very reasonable, and no transfare in terms of savings.

That is how I've adjusted to the oil crisis. Now, I have to find something to replace gasoline, like turbo.

Jerry Dedicatoria, tel. 8920-1700/256, 0920-5679115 and 9114259.

E-mail: tonda.dear@yahoo.ie

# ENTERTAINMENT

Lira Soriano-G. Velarde

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**Free Justin Bieber concert tickets**

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MOMS2DIGHTON will be picking one (for winners to get free tickets to the "Justin Bieber My World Tour" in Manila happening at the SM Mall of Asia Concert grounds on May 15. Of the five, two will be chosen as sweet and great Justin. Viewers will be asked to answer questions to be flashed on the Nickelodeon channel from April 1 to 30. Log on to www.nick.asia.com/justinbieber for more details.

## 'Care Divas' returns

ENCORE PERFORMANCES of the hit musical dramedy "Care Divas" have been scheduled at the Peta Philippine Educational Theater Association Theater Center, No. 5 Syquard Drive, New Manila, Quezon City this week. Inspired by the life stories of numerous Filipino workers who are caregivers of elderly Jews by day and drag performers by night, the production restarts tonight at 8 p.m., April 1 at 3 p.m. and 8 p.m., and April 3 at 3 p.m. and 8 p.m.

Repeating their roles are actors Mikki Ian, Vincent de Jesus, Phil Noble, Buddy Carnaje, Dude Turalia, Jaxe Bartid, Eric de la Cruz and Cecilia Custodio (Peta president).

Among the celebrities spotted in the audience during the two-month run were singer-actors Sharon Cuneta, BC Concepcion, Regine Velasquez, Ogie Alcasid and director Maryo J. de los Reyes, Joel Lamangan and Brillante Mendoza.

Featured guest artists are Shid Mohan, Rizz Ilhan, Jerald Napoles, Myke Salomon, Angeli Bayani, Miguel Hidalgo and Dominic Mellor-Jamaco.

Call 725-8201 or 0917-3662033, or log on to petatheater@gmail.com.

## 2 NGOs join new 'get Willie' drive

TWO NGO (nongovernment organization) umbrella groups and a concerned citizen have joined the outcry for "immediate sanctions" on controversial TV personality Willie Revillame for an episode of the TV5 game show, "Willing Willie," which he hosts.

In separate statements, the Salinlahi Alliance for Children's Concerns and Gabriela National Alliance of Women condemned the program's March 22 episode, saying it violated children's rights.

A video clip that went viral on YouTube showed Jan-Jan Sena, 6, performing a dedicated striptease. Around, Revillame asked the boy to repeat the dance, then joined in while the studio audience cheered wildly.

Salinlahi took exception to the host's comment, "That's how hard life is. Jacque has to learn cradle-dancing at his age, for the sake of his family." Revillame gave the boy P30,000.

Gabriela assailed Revillame's defense in last Monday's episode of the program as "brazen."

The women's group said it was "sadistic" of Revillame to say that more important nationalissues should be tackled instead of castigating his show over an episode.

National Museum consultant John Silva, as a concerned citizen, sent out a press statement of his own urging a boycott of the product advertised on "Willing Willie."

Describing the episode as "sickening," Silva said such a boycott was the viewers' way of getting even "if you are so disgusted as I am."

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DUMAGUETE

BACOLOD

ILOILO

GENSAN

ILOCOS NORTE

CLICK!

ON "AMERICAN IDOL" results night tomorrow, Season 3 champ Fantasia will sing her new single "Collard Greens & Cornbread" while rapper Lupe Fiasco and Grammy winner Jamie Foxx will perform "Hot Wings (I Wanna Wait)," from the animated feature film "Rio." Performance night airs tonight at 8 (10 ET/PT, replay at 10:30 on 1 and elimination night, tomorrow at 8 (10 ET/PT, replay at 10:30 p.m.) on GMA News TV. (Source: 11...

Ayala Malls

## MOVIE TIME

**GLORIETTA 4**
1: SUCKER PUNCH
2: JUSTIN BIEBER NEVER SAY NEVER (3D)
3: LINCOLN LAWYER
4: GIRL WITH DRAGON TATTOO
5: RED RIDING HOOD
6: CATCH ME IN IN LOVE
7: UNKNOWN

**GREENBELT 1**
1: SUCKER PUNCH
2: CATCH ME IN IN LOVE

**GREENBELT 2**
1: LINCOLN LAWYER
2: SUCKER PUNCH
3: WORLD INVASION: BATTLE: LOS ANGELES (3D)
4: JUSTIN BIEBER NEVER SAY NEVER (3D)
5: UNKNOWN

**ALABANG TOWN CENTER**
1: CATCH ME IN IN LOVE
2: WORLD INVASION BATTLE: LOS ANGELES
3: JUSTIN BIEBER NEVER SAY NEVER (3D)
4: LIMITLESS
5: SUCKER PUNCH

**AYALA CENTER CEBU**
1: SUCKER PUNCH
2: WORLD INVASION BATTLE: LOS ANGELES
3: JUSTIN BIEBER NEVER SAY NEVER (3D)
4: CATCH ME IN IN LOVE

**MARQUEE**
1: SUCKER PUNCH
2: JUSTIN BIEBER NEVER SAY NEVER(3D)
3: THE RITES
4: CATCH ME IN IN LOVE

**MARKET! MARKET!**
1: JUSTIN BIEBER NEVER SAY NEVER (3D)
2: LIMITLESS
3: SUCKER PUNCH
4: TEMPORARILY CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
5: TEMPORARILY CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
6: CATCH ME IN IN LOVE
7: RESERVED

**TRINOMA**
1: RED RIDING HOOD
2: LINCOLN LAWYER
3: GIRL WITH DRAGON TATTOO
4: JUSTIN BIEBER NEVER SAY NEVER (3D)
5: LIMITLESS
6: SUCKER PUNCH
7: CATCH ME IN IN LOVE

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**Movie schedules may change without prior notice.** For verification, please call 729-7777.
*Reservations open in all SureSeats cinema. Purchases open for M-Past cardholders only.

## MOVIE SPECIAL

Cookie C.D. and Pal are flying high these days in Ayala Malls Cinemas!

Glorietta 4: April 1 | 1:00 pm
Greenbelt 2: April 1 | 3:30 pm
Market! Market!: April 1 | 4:00 pm
Alabang Town Center: April 3 | 4:00 pm

## MALL EVENTS

**GLORIETTA**
Virgin Beyond Is Anti-Depressant: April 10 '11 Activity Center, 3pm

**GREENBELT**

**ALABANG TOWN CENTER**
Time Lapse Fashion Day Campaign
April 9 | 1:00 - Rotunda

**SOMERSET HIGH STREET**
Beauty & Design: May 21

**MARKET! MARKET!**
Beauty & Design: April 30

**AYALA CENTER CEBU**
Ayala and Asian Parks Triangle Design Fiesta
Autumn in the Woods Tree Decorations
Virtual Reality Theater Suite
March 30-April 4, Activity Center

**TRINOMA**
Mizuki Sparkling Mission Suite
March 30-April 4, Activity Center

**MARQUEE**

**ONESEA**
For inquiries, please call 571-4668 or 571-4441

## MALL SPECIAL

CATCH KARI AGUINO
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# Roller coasters and musical theater

I LIKE a good roller coaster ride.

Last Christmas, my family went on an outing to Disneyland, the happiest place on earth, later in the day, once my daughter had fallen asleep, Bob and I decided to ride on California Screamin'—the huge roller coaster at California Adventure.

The ride began by being shot like a cannonball towards the first fun, only to be followed by numerous curves, tunnels and slows. The sheer speed and force smacked our bodies every which way for the duration of the ride. Although the ride can last like several hours, it only lasted for about a minute.

BACK STORY

*Lest Solonga*

It was exhilarating to be sure, and at its conclusion we found ourselves uttering those three magical words: Let's go again!

### Built to code

It was great not having to worry. The coaster was built to code, adherent to stringent building regulations, as well as constructed with painstaking attention to detail under the strictest supervision. I know that nothing would go wrong, which then gave me the freedom to enjoy the ride to its fullest. Sure enough, California Screamin' did not in any way disappoint.

It was similar to watching "Wicked."

More than just a few times, I've been severely disappointed by mediocre to lackluster performances: flat acting, bad singing and a complete absence of skill.

Thankfully, last Sunday, that wasn't the case. I headed off to RCBC Plaza to watch the final performance of Atlanta Productions' "Heir to Normal." I had previously seen this show on Broadway the day before it won three Lortel Theatre Awards.

I was a wreck at the end of the Broadway performance, and am tripped the same here.

The actors in the Manila production, I'm either worked extra or watched over the years, so I know that I wouldn't be thrown by school taste or hammy acting.

Newcomer Maddel Bocobo had a lovely singing voice and great stage presence as Henry Sim Gamito as Natalie was a relatable bundle of angst and it was beautiful watching her explode.

Eddie Rivera was ever reliable, maintaining full vocal and emotional control as Gabe. And although I would never pronounce Jake Macapagal to be a rock star, then was exactly what he projected—neon lights, bright pitched screams and all.

### Incredible actors

The emotional center of "Here to Normal" fell to the hands of two incredible actors: Sheridan Luzuriaga (Nida) and Jett Pangan (Jake).

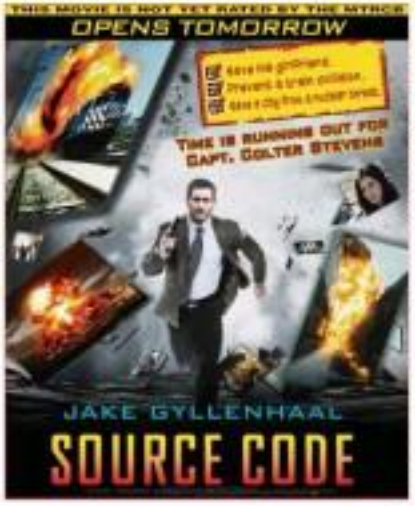
I always expect Meriche to be amazing, after witnessing her transformations into Eva Peron in "Evita" and Mrs. Lovett in "Sweeney Todd," I knew that Gianni's character would be a perfect fit for Meriche's honed skill. She was in great voice, vibrant she and her career as a prince of a fellah, and B Dancibo a glow.

Jett Pangan is the real interest in the theatrics of The Bench, a guy job that has him jumping about on stage, a veritable whirling dervish performing for a mad, screaming, often unruly crowd. As Jun however, he was always the positive presence, the calm amid the storms, the end to everyone's wild bolts of lightning.

### Heartbreaking

Although at the beginning of the show Jun made reference to her keeping all the photo-ops going, it was actually Dan who did, trying to keep his entire family from crashing to the floor. At the end of the musical when Dan finally broke down, no longer able to hold it all together, it was heartbreaking and devastating to watch. Without reservation, Jett is one of the finest musical leading men to grace the Philippine stage, and I look forward to many years of his appearances.

I enjoyed this production more than when I first saw it, the music more familiar than it was two years ago. I must give credit to the people behind the scenes: Bobby Garcia's masterful direction, Chant Arevalo-Pascual's clever musical staging, the great musicians led by Gerjan Javier and—finally—a sound system that did not make me want to strangle the sound person in charge.

This is the best production Atlanta has presented in its many years of producing theater—new with a mammoth set, a huge cast, and tucks of elaborate costumes, but with simplicity and direction, and a cast of six wonderful actors whose sole purpose was to tell a good story.

In short, the show was built to code. And everyone in that audible subtitling audience just sat back and enjoyed it. Guys, let's go again.